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LITERARY HOURS:

OR

SKETCHES,

CRITICAL, NARRATIVE, AND POETICAL.

94249
&c.

BY

NATHAN DRAKE, M.D.

AUTHOR OF ESSAYS ON PERIODICAL LITERATURE,
OF SHAKSPEARE AND HIS TIMES, AND OF
WINTER NIGHTS.

A little peaceful home
Bounds all my wants and wishes, add to this
My book and friend, and this is happiness.
From the Spanish of Francisco Rioje.

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LITERARY HOURS.

No. XXIV.

Sweet is the odour of the Morning's flower,
And rich in melody her accents rise;
Yet dearer to my soul the shadowy hour,
At which her blossoms close, her music dies;—
For then, while languid Nature droops her head,
She wakes the tear 'tis luxury to shed.

HELEN MARIA WILLIAMS.

SOME of the sweetest passages in the productions of the poets, ancient or modern, may be drawn from their descriptions of evening and night scenery, and many of these elegant sketches have been committed to memory for their peculiar truth and beauty. Even when the delineation is merely that of inanimate nature, still the pensive train of thought which we usually associate with the decline of a fine day, or the tranquil lustre of a moon-light night, brings with it a fascinating charm; but when with these are mingled or contrasted the passions of the human breast, an interest of a stronger kind is excited, and the picture becomes complete. What can harmonise better with the sensations of love or friendship than

those delicious tints which a setting sun frequently diffuses over the face of nature, or what more congenial to the gentlest emotions of the heart than the landscape lighted up by the soothing splendour of an autumnal moon? How are the tortures of an agonised mind, the wilder passions of the soul, heightened by the contrast of scenery such as this! When sorrow, disappointment, and despair, exert their energy surrounded by images of the most beautiful repose, they rush upon the eye in so bold and prominent a style as instantly and forcibly to arrest our feelings and compel our keenest attention.

Omitting therefore those evening and night pieces, however celebrated, which include not the play of human passions, I shall confine myself to the selection of a few of the most exquisite specimens, where the affections of the heart are mingled or contrasted with the adjacent scenery, confident that the passages adduced will amply reward those who cultivate a taste for elegant literature and pathetic imagery.

In the *Argonautics* of APOLLONIUS RHODIUS a description of this kind, in which the inquietude of Medea is opposed to the tranquillity of all around her, has been justly admired, and may indeed be considered as one of the most highly finished scenes in the poetry of antiquity. It has been thus happily translated.

Night on the earth pour'd darkness; on the sea
The wakesome sailor to Orion's star
And Helicè turn'd heedful. Sunk to rest.
The traveller forgot his toil; his charge

The centinel; her death-devoted babe,
The mother's painless breast. The village dog
Had ceas'd his troublous bay. Each busy tumult
Was hush'd at this dead hour; and darkness slept,
Lock'd in the arms of silence. She alone,
Medea slept not.

Numerous imitations have been given of these beautiful lines, though not one, perhaps, has attained to the excellence of the original. The "*Nox erat, et placidum carpebant fessa soporem,*" &c. &c. of Virgil, and the similar passage in the *Gerusalemme Liberata* of Tasso, may be mentioned as approaching nearest to the Grecian model.

The pangs of remorse and despair, as contrasted with the sublime and splendid repose of a setting sun, are no-where so admirably drawn as in the *Robbers* of SCHILLER, a drama that does honour to Germany, and to modern genius. Moor, the principal character, and Captain of a band of ferocious banditti, gifted by nature with every amiable, every generous propensity, is plunged into a state of absolute misanthropy and despair through the villainy of his nearest relatives. Thus situated, he embraces the idea of fatalism, and conceives himself destined to pour upon others the vengeance of an irritated God; he indulges therefore a gloomy and terrible delight in the execution of what he deems his dreadful mission, believing, however, that for the punishment of his own sins he is thus condemned to act a part that shall blast his name with infamy, and consign

his soul to hell. From such a character the most excruciating remorse might be expected, and the art of the poet is in no portion of the piece more exquisitely displayed than in the following scene, where the employment of evening imagery will readily be acknowledged, by every critic, powerfully to heighten the effect. An engagement has just taken place between the Bohemian dragoons and the banditti, in which the latter proved victorious.

SCENE — *The Banks of the Danube.*

THE ROBBERS STATIONED ON A HEIGHT, WHILE THEIR HORSES ARE GRAZING ON THE DECLIVITY BELOW.

MOOR.

I must rest here. (*He throws himself on the ground.*) My joints are shook asunder;— my tongue cleaves to my mouth — dry as a potsherd. I would beg of some of you to fetch me a little water in the hollow of your hand from yonder brook, but you are all weary to death. (*While he is speaking, Switzer goes out unperceived, to fetch him some water.*)

GRIMM.

How glorious, how majestic, yonder setting sun!

MOOR.

(*Lost in contemplation.*) 'Tis thus the hero falls; — 'tis thus he dies — in god-like majesty!

GRIMM.

The sight affects you, Sir.

MOOR.

When I was yet a boy, — a mere child, — it was my favourite thought, — my wish to live like him! (*Pointing to the sun.*) Like him to die. (*Suppressing his anguish.*) 'Twas an idle thought, a boy's conceit! —

GRIMM.

It was so.

MOOR.

(*Pulling his hat over his eyes.*) There was a time: — Leave me, my friends — alone —

GRIMM.

Moor! Moor! 'Sdeath! How his countenance changes! —

RASMAN.

Zounds! what is the matter with him? — Is he ill?

MOOR.

There was a time, when I could not go to sleep, if I had forgotten my prayers! —

GRIMM.

Have you lost your senses? What! yet a school-boy! — 'Twere fit indeed such thoughts should vex you!

MOOR.

(*Resting his head on Grimm's bosom.*) Brother! Brother!

GRIMM.

Come, come — be not a child, I beg it of you —

MOOR.

A child! Oh! that I were a child once more!

GRIMM.

Fy, fy! Clear up that cloudy brow! Look yonder, what a landscape; what a lovely evening!

MOOR.

Ay, my friend! that scene so noble! — this world so beautiful!

GRIMM.

Why, that's talking like a man.

MOOR.

This earth so grand!

GRIMM.

Well said! — That's what I like!

MOOR.

And I so hideous in this world of beauty — and I a monster on this magnificent earth — the prodigal son!

GRIMM.

(*Affectionately.*) Moor! Moor!

MOOR.

My innocence! O my innocence! — See how all nature expands at the sweet breath of spring. — O God! that this paradise — this heaven — should be a hell to me! — When all is happiness — all in the sweet spirit of peace — the world one family — and its Father there above! — who is not my Father! — I alone the outcast — the prodigal son! — Of all the children of his mercy, I alone rejected! (*Starting back with horror.*) The companion of murderers — of viperous fiends! — bound down, enchained to guilt and horror!

RASMAN.

'Tis inconceivable! I never saw him thus moved before.

MOOR.

(*With great emotion.*) Oh! that I could return once more into the womb that bare me! that I hung an infant on the breast! that I were born a beggar — the meanest hind — a peasant of the field! I would toil till the sweat of blood dropt from my brow, to purchase the luxury of one sound sleep, the rapture of a single tear!

GRIMM.

(*To the rest.*) Peace, O peace! — the paroxysm will soon be over.

MOOR.

There was a time when I could weep with ease. — O days of bliss! — Mansion of my fa-

thers! O vales so green, so beautiful! scenes of my infant years, enjoyed by fond enthusiasm! will you no more return? no more exhale your sweets to cool this burning bosom!—Oh, never, never shall they return—no more refresh this bosom with the breath of peace. They are gone! gone for ever!" *

There cannot be a nobler subject for a picture than the preceding scène. The figure of Moor agitated by remorse, yet characterised by a wild and terrible grandeur, surrounded by a set of banditti savage as the beasts of the desert, and who are stationed on a rugged cliff contemplating the beauty of the setting sun, and the landscape tinted by its beams; the Danube rolling at their feet, and their horses grazing on its verdant banks!—The pencil of Salvator Rosa could alone do justice to the conception of the poet.

No bard, however, has exceeded, or, perhaps, equalled OSSIAN in the frequency and felicity of delineation of this kind. His evening and night scenery abound with the most accurate painting, and are generally mingled or contrasted with pathetic sentiment and description. They soften, and powerfully appeal to the heart, by exciting its most simple and natural emotions. In the beautiful poem of *Darthula*, where Nathos, with whom the Daughter of Colla had fallen in love and had fled, is driven back by adverse winds on that part of the coast of Ulster where Cairbar, his inveter-

* Schiller's Robbers, p. 72. edition of 1795.

ate enemy, had encamped with his army, he exclaims on landing: —

"I will go towards that mossy tower, to see who dwells about the beam. Rest, Dar-thula, on the shore! rest in peace, thou lovely light! the sword of Nathos is around thee, like the lightning of heaven!"

"He went. She sat alone; she heard the rolling of the wave. The big tear is in her eye. She looks for returning Nathos. Her soul trembles at the blast. She turns her ear towards the tread of his feet. The tread of his feet is not heard. 'Where art thou, son of my love! The roar of the blast is around me. Dark is the cloudy night. But Nathos does not return. What detains thee, chief of Etha? Have the foes met the hero in the strife of night?'

"He returned, but his face was dark. He had seen his departed friend! It was the wall of Tura. The ghost of Cuthullin stalked there alone: The sighing of his breast was frequent. The decayed flame of his eyes was terrible! His spear was a column of mist. The stars looked dim through his form. His voice was like hollow wind in a cave: his eye a light seen afar. He told the tale of grief. The soul of Nathos was sad, like the sun in the day of mist, when his face is watery and dim."

"'Why art thou sad, O Nathos?' said the lovely daughter of Colla. 'Thou art a pillar of light to Dar-thula. The joy of her eyes is in Etha's chief. Where is my friend, but Nathos? My father, my brother is fallen!" *

* Ossian's Poems, vol. i. p. 357, 8vo. edit. of 1784.

Nathos and his two brothers, after contending bravely with their numerous opponents, are at length slain; Nathos, however, is represented as having, previous to the engagement, exclaimed, "O, that the voice of Cona, that Ossian, might be heard in my praise! then would my spirit rejoice in the midst of the rushing winds."

"And my voice shall praise thee, Nathos," sings the enthusiastic bard, "the voice of Ossian shall rise in thy praise, son of the generous Usnoth! Why was I not on Lena, when the battle rose? Then would the sword of Ossian defend thee, or himself fall low!"

"We sat, that night, in Selma round the strength of the shell. The wind was abroad, in the oaks. The spirit of the mountain roared. The blast came rustling through the hall, and gently touched my harp. The sound was mournful and low, like the song of the tomb. Fingal heard it the first. The crowded sighs of his bosom rose. 'Some of my heroes are low,' said the grey-haired king of Morven. 'I hear the sound of death on the harp. Ossian, touch the trembling string. Bid the sorrow rise; that their spirits may fly, with joy, to Morven's woody hills!' I touched the harp before the king; the sound was mournful and low. 'Bend forward from your clouds,' I said, 'ghosts of my fathers! bend. Lay by the red terror of your course. Receive the falling chief; whether he comes from a distant land, or rises from the rolling sea. Let his robe of mist be near; his spear that is formed

of a cloud. Place an half-extinguished meteor by his side, in the form of the hero's sword. And, oh! let his countenance be lovely, that his friends may delight in his presence. Bend from your clouds,' I said, 'ghosts of my fathers! bend!'" *

Dar-thula is one of the sweetest compositions of the Caledonian Bard, and the deaths of the sons of Usnoth, and that of Dar-thula, are the vehicles of so much pathetic imagery and tender sentiment, that, though unconnected with the subject of this sketch, I cannot repel the temptation of enriching my paper with passages so truly in the spirit of the highest poetry.

"The sons of Usnoth fell in blood. They fell like three young oaks, which stood alone on the hill: The traveller saw the lovely trees, and wondered how they grew so lonely: the blast of the desert came, by night, and laid their green heads low; next day he returned, but they were withered, and the heath was bare!" †

Dar-thula having secretly armed to assist her lover, is wounded by an arrow in the side, and drops dead upon the body of the fallen Nathos.

"'Daughter of Colla! thou art low!' said Cairbar's hundred bards. 'Silence is at the blue streams of Selàma. Truthil's race have failed. When wilt thou rise in thy beauty, first of Erin's maids? Thy sleep is long in the tomb. The morning distant far. The sun

* Ossian's Poems, vol. i. p. 369.

† Vol. i. p. 372.

shall not come to thy bed and say, 'Awake, Dar-thula! awake, thou first of women! the wind of spring is abroad. The flowers shake their heads on the green hills. The woods wave their growing leaves.' Retire, O sun! the daughter of Colla is asleep. She will not come forth in her beauty. She will not move in the steps of her loveliness!" *

The impatience and tender anxiety of Dar-thula, the darkness of the night, the roaring of the blast, and the rolling of the sea, as she rests forlorn upon the beach, and listening for the return of her lover, are drawn with a masterly hand, and the spectre of Cuthullin and the pathetic exclamation of Dar-thula — "Where is my friend, but Nathos? My father, my brother is fallen!" complete the description. This, however, is shortly afterwards followed by the night scene in the hall of Fingal, than which nothing can be more striking and impressive, nothing more fully prove of what vast importance to poetry are the superstitions, the offspring of popular fancy or fear.

So many indeed are the night-pieces in Ossian which are mingled with pathetic emotion, and glow with vivid colouring, that to collect them all would require a volume. The opening however of the poem on the *Death of Cuthullin*, exhibits a specimen so admirable, so illustrative of the subject of this paper, that it necessarily demands insertion. Bragéla the

* Vol. i. p. 373.

Wife of Cuthullin, is represented on the sea-shore lamenting the absence of her hero.

"It is the white wave of the rock, and not Cuthullin's sails. Often do the mists deceive me for the ship of my love! when they rise round some ghost, and spread their grey skirts on the wind. Why dost thou delay thy coming, son of the generous Semo? Four times has autumn returned with its winds, and raised the seas of Togorma, since thou hast been in the roar of battles, and Bragéla distant far! Hills of the isle of mist! when will ye answer to his hounds? But ye are dark in your clouds. Sad Bragéla calls in vain! Night comes rolling down. The face of ocean fails. The heath-cock's head is beneath his wing. The hind sleeps with the hart of the desert. They shall rise with morning's light, and feed by the mossy stream. But my tears return with the sun. My sighs come on with the night." *

Though the situations of Dar-thula and Bragéla possess much of what is similar, both being placed during night on the sea-shore and waiting the return of a beloved object, yet is the imagery beautifully diversified. In the quotation from *The Death of Cuthullin*, the deception arising from the mists of the ocean, and the picturesque introduction of the heath-bird and the hind, have great merit, and strongly impress the imagination. Ossian and

* Vol. i. p. 377.

his immediate successors seem to have paid very accurate attention to the phænomena of the long nights in Autumn, and which, in the north of Europe, abound with objects, and rapid transitions in the atmosphere, well calculated for poetic detail. The little poem of *The Bards* translated by Macpherson in a note appended to the *Croma* of Ossian, entirely consists of description of this kind, and it is astonishing what variety the vicissitudes of one night could afford to the attentive observer of nature. These autumnal sketches, however, partaking little of those emotions which display the tenderer feelings of the heart, it will not be necessary in this place to quote them.

There is nothing in which Ossian more excels than in painting the effects of Music, and as these, especially in the works of our northern bard, are generally of a plaintive kind, and in a few instances combined with the most delicious night-scenery, I have selected one which probably for pensive imagery has no parallel in the annals of poesy.

"'This is no time,' replied the bard, 'to hear the song of joy: when the mighty are to meet in battle, like the strength of the waves of Lego. Why art thou so dark, Slimora! with all thy silent woods! No star trembles on thy top. No moon-beam on thy side. But the meteors of death are there: the grey watery forms of ghosts. Why art thou dark, Slimora! with thy silent woods?' He retired, in the sound of his song. Carril joined his voice. The music was like the memory of joys that

are past, pleasant and mournful to the soul. The ghosts of departed bards heard it on Slimora's side. Soft sounds spread along the wood. The silent valleys of night rejoice." *

"What a figure would such imagery and such scenery have made," observes Dr. Blair, "had they been presented to us adorned with the sweetness and harmony of the Virgilian numbers." †

With one passage more from the poem intitled *The Battle of Lora*, I shall conclude this selection of scenes, which, were not the few I have extracted sufficient to illustrate the purport of my paper, might be greatly extended.

"Lorma sat, in Aldo's hall. She sat at the light of a flaming oak. The night came down, but he did not return. The soul of Lorma is sad! 'What detains thee, hunter of Cona? Thou didst promise to return. Has the deer been distant far? do the dark winds sigh round thee on the heath? I am in the land of strangers; who is my friend but Aldo? Come from thy sounding hills, O my best beloved!'

"Her eyes are turned toward the gate. She listens to the rustling blast. She thinks it is Aldo's tread. Joy rises in her face! But sorrow returns again, like a thin cloud on the moon. 'Wilt thou not return, my love! Let me behold the face of the hill. The moon is in the east. Calm and bright is the breast of the lake!' When shall I behold his dogs, returning

* Vol. i. p. 380.

† Critical Dissertation on the Poems of Ossian, vol. ii. p. 412.

from the chace? When shall I hear his voice, loud and distant on the wind? Come from thy sounding hills, hunter of woody Cona!' His thin ghost appeared, on a rock, like a watery beam of feeble light: when the moon rushes sudden from between two clouds, and the midnight shower is on the field! She followed the empty form over the heath. She knew that her hero fell. I heard her approaching cries on the wind, like the mournful voice of the breeze, when it sighs on the grass of the cave.

"She came. She found her hero! Her voice was heard no more. Silent she rolled her eyes. She was pale and wildly sad! Few were her days on Cona. She sunk into the tomb. Fingal commanded his bards; they sung over the death of Lorma. The daughters of Morven mourned her, for one day in the year, when the dark winds of autumn returned!" *

Of the passages I have now given, two, one from APOLLONIUS RHODIUS, and one from SCHILLER, beautifully display the effect of contrast arising from the emotions of sorrow, disappointment, and remorse, as opposed to the tranquillity of nature during the dead hour of midnight, or to the calm and glowing splendour of a setting sun: whilst the night scenery drawn from OSSIAN is mingled with the tenderest passions of the heart, and powerfully aids the impression which the poet wishes to inspire.

Homer, Virgil, Tasso, Camöens and Milton, have many celebrated descriptions of night and

* Vol. i. p. 402.

evening scenery, though, except in the imitations alluded to from the Rhodian, not sufficiently mingled or contrasted with pathetic emotion to become objects of quotation in this paper. They are, for the most part, pictures in Natural History, or still life, and though remarkable for their faithful delineation, or the propriety of their introduction, involve little that may call forth the tear of pity. I must be understood here, however, as speaking only of such occasional descriptions of the evening or night as are interwoven into the body of epic composition; for a considerable portion of the machinery and business of these poems is frequently carried on during the night, and often includes much of the pathetic, as the episode of the destruction of Troy in Virgil, &c.; the incidents, however, of these episodes have little or no connection with the natural phenomena of the period during which they pass. From Shakspeare also, many apposite specimens might have been taken, but being so popular an author, and these passages almost committed to memory, I preferred selecting from sources less known. Of smaller poems, the Elegy of Gray may be considered as the most exquisite and finished example in the world, of the effect resulting from the intermixture of evening scenery and pathetic reflection.

For numerous and varied instances of combination of this kind, however, the works of Ossian are almost inexhaustible, and though the novelty of his style, or rather of the dress

in which the Translator has thought proper to clothe him, will at first revolt, yet with due attention the cadences will become familiar, and the imagery, though crowded, no longer distract the mind: it is then that his characters, his descriptive powers, the sublimity and pathos of his sentiments will be accurately and distinctly felt, and enthusiasm take place of inattraction and fatigue.

No. XXV.

——Hail, ye mighty masters of the lay,
Nature's true sons, the friends of man and truth,
Whose song, sublimely sweet, serenely gay,
Amus'd my childhood, and inform'd my youth.
O let your spirit still my bosom sooth,
Inspire my dreams, and my wild wanderings guide!
Your voice each rugged path of life can smooth;
For well I know, wherever ye reside,
There harmony, and peace, and innocence, abide.

BEATTIE.

IT is the remark of an Author of exquisite taste that "the Moderns have perhaps practised no species of poetry with so little success, and with such indisputable inferiority to the Ancients, as the Ode." * Greatly as I respect the abilities and critical acumen of Dr. Warton, I am tempted in this instance to form a very different judgment, and shall endeavour to rescue the poets of this island at least, from an imputation they probably have not merited. This ingenious writer conceives their want of success to be owing to the harshness and intractability

* Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope, vol. i. p. 64.

of the language they have had the misfortune to compose in; now, though it may be readily conceded that the English in sweetness and smoothness must, in general, yield to the Greek, and sometimes even to the Latin, yet have we, especially among our later poets, many specimens of versification, and of selection of language, peculiarly musical and harmonious, and fully adequate to prove that all its asperities may be worn down by the judicious application of the file, and rendered sufficiently terse and polished for the more delicate effusions of the lyre. Could it be indeed for a moment supposed that mere smoothness of diction constituted the sole, or even the principal merit of lyric poetry, it might justly be deemed the most worthless of all the branches of literature, and entirely dependent on mere mellifluence of cadence; on the contrary, however, it will probably be admitted that those combinations of phrase, those felicities of diction, those expressions of a lyric hue, the words that breathe and burn, so essential to this department, are the creations of the poet, and through the medium of genius may be drawn from the bosom of any language. Conceiving, therefore, that excellence in lyric composition is attached to no peculiar tongue, but the product of ability working even on the most rugged materials, and by condensation and selection, subduing them to its purpose, an oppressive idea, impeding all effort to excel, is removed, and we may cheerfully proceed to compare, and to rank the productions of the

modern lyric bard with the more applauded ones of the ancient.

Under the classes of the *Sublime*, the *Pathetic*, the *Descriptive*, and the *Amatory*, may be arranged most of the productions of the lyric muse. To the first belong vivid enthusiasm, richness of imagery and metaphor, abruptness of transition, and a peculiar warmth and impetuosity of diction. To excel in this species of Ode demands a felicity and strength of genius that has seldom been attained; all the higher beauties of poetry, vastness of conception, brilliancy of colouring, grandeur of sentiment, the terrible and the appalling, must combine, and with mysterious energy alarm and elevate the imagination. A lightning of phrase should pervade the more empassioned parts, and an awful and even dreadful obscurity, from prophetic, or superhuman agency, diffuse its influence over the whole. Of the lyric poetry of the Greeks a small portion only has descended to posterity, and of the productions of PINDAR, all whose remaining odes fall under the present class, most probably the noblest part has been buried in the gulph of time. What we have, however, is dear to the man of poetic taste, though, perhaps, not fully equal to the ideas formed of it from the praises of his contemporaries, and their relation of its effects upon the minds of his countrymen; a circumstance that leads to the supposition that the pieces lost were of superior merit to those we possess. Had his dithyrambics been preserved, our opinion of this celebrated poet had in all

probability corresponded with that of the ancients, as a more enthusiastic, a more independent and vigorous tone were, it is said, their characteristic. As it is, no piece can now be selected from his works that can justly come into competition with the *Bard* of GRAY; over this inimitable ode a tinge so wildly awful, so gloomily terrific, is thrown, as without any exception to place it at the head of lyric poetry. If any effusions of the Grecian muse approach it in these respects, the choruses of ÆSCYHLUS may be adduced; these certainly possess much of that tremendous painting, that mysterious solemnity, so vital in this lofty sphere of imagination; for to Æschylus, perhaps, adheres a peculiar character, a kind of savage and gigantic sublimity which stands alone amid the literary records of Greece, and has only been rivalled by the war songs of the northern Scalds. The Gothic and Celtic superstitions indeed, possess imagery peculiarly appropriate to the higher efforts of lyric composition, and several of our poets have, with admirable effect, availed themselves of these sources of the sublime. What can exceed the thrilling horror of Gray's celebrated odes from the Norse, which first opened to English poetry a mine of the most wild yet terrific mythology! Since their appearance the fictions of the *Edda* have been seized upon with more freedom and avidity, and in the epic, dramatic, and lyric productions of HOLE and SAYERS appear with renovated lustre. The features of the Celtic are certainly not of so striking a form,

yet the dreadful rites of Druidism, and the noble imagery of Ossian, afford valuable materials for the lyric bard; the chorus of MASON, the songs of RICHARDS, and some of the sketches of Sayers are masterly specimens of what they can effect. The more common superstitions, too, of modern Europe, the agency of ghosts and fairies, and beings of another world, have thrown a solemn and a singularly impressive hue over many of our best pieces. Mr. Hole's Ode to Terror, and Miss WILLIAMS's fine fragment, "*Rise Winds of Night*," with COLLINS's Ode on the popular Superstitions of the Highlands, evince their powerful operation on the mind, and their successful employment in this province of the art. Now, as the Ancients had confessedly no superstition or mythology which in wild sublimity or sportive fancy can be compared with that of the Goths and Celts, the Moderns have in the higher walks of poetry, and especially in the ode, which demands so much enthusiasm, a manifest and decided superiority, so far as a more poetic and exalted superstition can be supposed to confer it. But even laying aside those compositions which are dependent on these more appropriate systems of fabling, it will still, I think, be granted, that from neither Pindar nor HORACE can be selected an ode, in beauty of colouring or strength of conception more estimable than Gray's on The Progress of Poetry, or Collins's to The Passions.* In

* From the following passage in a letter of this exquisite poet, written to Dr. Hayes, Professor of Music in the Uni-

the Ode of Gray, indeed, there are several imitations of Pindar, and one entire stanza almost literally translated from him; and the whole piece may in fact be considered as an admirable copy of, or attempt to rival his manner and style, yet such a one as Pindar would have been proud to own. As to Horace, I know not that from his large collection one ode truly sublime can be produced; many may be found that possess true grandeur of diction, and much elevation of idea, as when he spiritedly bursts forth,

Quem virum, aut heroa, lyrâ vel acri.

or when describing the genius of Pindar,

Pindarum quisquis studet æmulari.

But the finger of criticism cannot be placed upon one that fully dilates and astonishes the mind by the boldness and magnitude of the

---

versity of Oxford, it would appear that he had composed another Ode for Music under the title of *The Music of the Grecian Theatre*. He thus speaks of this production after noticing the honour which had been conferred upon him at Oxford in selecting his former poem on *The Passions:* "I could send you one written on a nobler subject, and which, though I have been persuaded to bring it forth in London, I think more calculated for an audience in the University. The subject is the Music of the Grecian Theatre, in which I have, I hope naturally, introduced the various characters with which the chorus was concerned, as Œdipus, Medea, Electra, Orestes, &c. &c. The composition, too, is probably more correct, as I have chosen the ancient Tragedies for my models, and only copied the most affecting passages in them."— SEWARD'S *Anecdotes of Distinguished Persons.*

conception, or on one that with an unremitting blaze of splendor pours forth thoughts that "scatter wild dismay." Felicity of diction and versification, artful insinuation of moral, exquisite allusion to and description of the joys of love and wine, and an accurate perception of character, are the prominent features of this poet in his lyric capacity, who is, and ever will be, the favourite of cultivated taste. Not that he is devoid of enthusiasm, for several of his odes, and especially the fourth of the third book, powerfully convince every reader of the contrary; all we can affirm is this, that it is not of the highest tone, nor can he rank with a Pindar, a Gray, or a Collins. On the celebrated Ode of DRYDEN, great and merited applause has been bestowed; much of it is certainly written with a glow and vigour of fancy nearly unparalleled: it has the freedom and animation attributed to the ancient dithyrambic, and the imagery almost starts into existence; but I am far from conceiving it a perfect production, or agreed in allowing it to take the lead in modern lyrics: its language in many parts is defective and inharmonic, it preserves not the dignity so essential to the ode of this species, and even sometimes descends to the familiarity of a common drinking song. The phrases and lines alluded to, it is unnecessary here to point out, as they are quoted and commented upon in a very ingenious paper in the Winter-Evenings of Dr. Knox, with whom, in his estimate of the general merit of

the poem, I perfectly concur. Two or three of the odes of AKENSIDE may be also mentioned as exhibiting some nervous and well selected description: his Odes to Lord Huntingdon, and on Lyric Poetry, claim alike from Liberty and the Muse the meed of immortality; the general cast, however, of his style in this department is of a kind far inferior to the two productions just mentioned, and by no means of the genuine lyric hue.

After taking this short view, and I trust with impartiality shall we still confess our inferiority to the ancients? Shall we not rather be tempted to place Gray and Collins at the head of lyric poetry in Europe ancient or modern? — Pindar, Æschylus, and Horace, have already been noticed, and modern Italy and France can bring no competitors; *Petrarca*, *Metastasio*, *Fulvio*, *Testi*, *Rousseau*, or *Gresset*, having few or no pretensions to the loftier tones of the lyre. Among the Germans, indeed, some powerful candidates have lately started, and *Klopstock* is renowned for the spirit and sublimity of his lyric effusions; but they are not yet sufficiently familiar in this country to admit of comparison.

Were we to gather our lyric pieces and dispose them into their different classes, a collection might be made that would, I think, bid defiance to competition. In pursuit of this idea, therefore, I shall throw together, under each division of the sublime, the pathetic, the descriptive, and amatory, the first lines and

authors' names of those odes which have particularly struck me for their excellence. *

ODES, CLASS I.

SUBLIME.

1. 'Twas at the royal feast for Persia won - - - - - - Dryden.
2. Thou! to whom the world unknown Collins.
3. When Music, heavenly Maid! was young - - - - - - Collins.
4. As once, if not with light regard - Collins.
5. Once more I join the Thespian quire Akenside.
6. Thy spirit, Independence! let me share - - - - - - Smollett.
7. Daughter of Jove, relentless power Gray
8. Ruin seize thee, ruthless King! - Gray.
9. Awake, Æolian lyre, awake - - Gray.
10. Now the storm begins to lower - Gray.
11. Uprose the King of Men with speed Gray.
12. Had I but the torrent's might - - Gray.
13. Owen's praise demands my song - Gray.
14. Oppression dies: the Tyrant falls - Mason.
15. Hark! heard ye not yon footstep dread - - - - - - Mason.
16. Beneath the beech whose branches bare - - - - - - Warton.
17. Bound for holy Palestine - - Warton.
18. Stately the feast and high the cheer Warton.
19. Rise, winds of Night - - - Williams.
20. Farewell, dear Land! thou gallant seat - - - - - - Sargent.

* The list might now, after a lapse of sixteen years, be much augmented, especially under the classes of the *pathetic* and *amatory* ode, to which the recent poets, *Campbell*, *Moore*, and *Byron*, would necessarily become great contributors.

21. Rise, might of Erin! rise! - - Brooke.
22. King of gods on shining throne - Sayers.
23. When from the foe's bright spear - Sayers.
24. Around me night and silence reign Hole.
25. Hail, Melancholy! whom of yore - Hole.
26. What mean these dreadful sounds that rise - - - - - Hole.
27. Hence, to the realms of Night, dire Demon! hence - - - Rogers.
28. Spirit, who sweepest the wild harp of Time - - - - - Coleridge.
29. Where restless Teign with many a surge - - - - - Polwhele.

It is not possible to move a step in this discussion without deeply regretting the destructive ravages of time. In the pathetic ode the Greeks possessed an inestimable treasure: had the poems of SAPPHO and SIMONIDES descended to us uninjured, we may conceive, from the few fragments that remain, with what exquisite delight we should have hung over this invaluable deposit; mourning, therefore, its diminished state, and adopting the quotation of Addison, we may exclaim

> O suavis anima! qualem te dicam bonam
> Antehac fuisse, tales cum sint reliquiæ.
>
> PHÆDRUS.

The pieces of Sappho, however, now left us, being principally of the amatory kind, I shall defer any further notice of them, except in one instance, until that species of ode comes under review; and of Simonides so little has been

preserved, that though celebrated for his pathetic powers, the fragment happily snatched from oblivion by Dionysius is the only proof of the truth of the assertion. This indeed is beyond all praise, for the lamentation of *Danae* is pregnant with those touches of nature which pass directly to the heart. Had the works of these authors been entire, the inferiority of the moderns in this branch of lyric poetry had most probably been felt; fortunately for their reputation, setting aside the fragment of Simonides, they are rescued from comparison, the beautiful ode of Sappho ranking under another class. The choruses of SOPHOCLES and EURIPIDES, indeed, occasionally possess pathetic passages, especially in the *Philoctetes* of the former, but their peculiar merit is that of description and appropriate moral. Turning, then, to the master of the Latin lyre, it will, I should imagine, be readily conceded that he has touched the strings of pity with a sparing hand; he seldom paints to the heart; the tenderest sympathies are not awakened; few tears have dropped upon the leaves of Horace. The most pathetic morsel I recollect, closes the sixth ode of the second book addressed to Septimus.

Ille te mecum locus, et beatæ
Postulant arces; ibi tu calentem
Debita sparges lacryma favillam
Vatis amici.

These blest abodes, these chosen bowers
Shall gild with joy life's fleeting hours,
Here, when my days shall end,

Bathe my lov'd ashes with a tear,
And cherish with regret sincere,
Thy poet, and thy friend.

BOSCAWEN.

How sweet, how exquisite the sensations these lines call forth, how preferable to the merely elegant or voluptuous ode! and what regret must dwell upon the recollection that the poet did not more frequently indulge in such a style. One peculiar beauty, however, attends the voluptuous odes of Horace, which produces a most striking contrast, and breathes a spirit of pensive morality. Amid all the delights of love and wine, the closing scene of life is not forgotten, death rises in the distant view.

Linquenda tellus, et domus, et placens
Uxor; neque harum, quas colis, arborum,
Te, præter invisas cupressos,
Ulla brevem dominum sequetur.

Lib. ii. Od. xiv.

A short review shall now be taken of our own poets who have excelled in the pathetic ode; and I hesitate not in constituting COLLINS High Priest in the Temple of Pity. Nothing can exceed the sweet pathos, the tender imagery of his pieces, accompanied by a wild romantic warmth of fancy that exalts the feelings he is solicitous to convey. His Dirge on Fidele, and his Ode on the death of Colonel Ross, seize powerfully upon the heart, and speak in the very tones of nature.

It is only within these few years that due attention has been paid to his merits, and the high station he occupies among our lyric bards acknowledged. The complaint of Scott of Amwell is at length superseded.

While Folly frequent boasts th' insculptur'd tomb,
By Flattery's pen inscrib'd with purchas'd praise,
While Rustic Labour's undistinguish'd doom
Fond Friendship's hand records in humble phrase,

Of Genius oft and Learning worse the lot,
For them no care, to them no honour shown:
Alive neglected, and when dead forgot,
Even COLLINS slumbers in a grave unknown.

A tomb has been erected at Chichester, adorned by the sculpture of Flaxman, and the poetry of Hayley *, and there

By fairy hands "his" knell is rung;
By forms unseen "his" dirge is sung;
There "Fancy" comes "at twilight" grey,
To bless the turf that wraps "his" clay;
And "Pity" shall awhile repair
To "mourn," a weeping "pilgrim" there.

GRAY, too, in whose bosom dwelt the most refined sensibility, who was "mark'd by Melancholy for her own," has in his Odes to Spring and on Eton College, whether we consider the sweetness of the versification, or its delicious strain of plaintive tenderness, rivalled every lyric effort of ancient or of modern date.

* Vide No iii. p. 52. vol. i. of this work.

There is a terseness also, a classical elegance in his composition, to which the English ode had, previous to his productions, been a stranger. To these let us add the Monody of LYTTELTON, and the Address to the Nightingale by SHAW; of the man who could peruse the latter without being deeply affected I should entertain an unfavourable opinion. Some pieces by MASON and COWPER, and others of a still more recent date, challenge our applause, and will be introduced into the list subjoined to these remarks, which pretends to enumerate a few only of the various pieces that might lay claim to admission, those, for instance, which more immediately interested the selector, and which memory first suggested. He, however, who shall glance his eye over the collection, imperfect as it may appear, will, I should conceive, not hesitate in drawing a conclusion favourable to the poets of his native isle; here the tones of the Grecian lyre have almost failed upon the ear, and the haughty genius of Imperial Rome shrinks from the contest, for the most strenuous champion of ancient superiority will not probably presume upon an appeal to his Horace in a question that must be be decided by the prevalence of pathetic powers.

ODES, CLASS II.

PATHETIC.

1. Blow, blow, thou winter wind - - Shakspeare.
2. Æthereal race, inhabitants of air Thomson.

3. At length escaped from every human eye - - - - - Lyttelton.
4. O thou! the friend of man, assign'd Collins.
5. While lost to all his former mirth Collins.
6. In yonder grave a druid lies - - Collins.
7. To fair Fidele's grassy tomb - - Collins.
8. How sleep the brave, who sink to rest - - - - - - Collins.
9. Sweet bird! that kindly perching near - - - - - - Shaw.
10. Yet do I live? O, how shall I sustain - - - - - - Shaw.
11. Lo! where the rosy-bosom'd hours Gray.
12. Ye distant spires, ye antique towers Gray.
13. Daughter of Jove, relentless Power Gray.
14. Ye green-hair'd Nymphs, whom Pan's decrees - - - Mason.
15. Ah, cease this kind persuasive strain - - - - - Mason.
16. When in the crimson cloud of Even Beattie.
17. Come, peace of mind, delightful guest - - - - - - Cowper.
18. O happy shades! to me unblest - Cowper,
19. The rose had been wash'd, just wash'd in a shower - - Cowper.
20. Thou lone companion of the spectred night - - - - - Wolcot.
21. Dark, dark is Moina's bed - - Sayers.
22. O! Synge untoe mie roundelaie Chatterton.
23. Not for the promise of the labour'd field - - - - - - Anon.
24. Mahali dies! O'er yonder plain - Edwards.
25. I wish I were where Helen lies! - Pinkerton.
26. Pale wither'd wanderer, seek not here - - - - - - Roberts.
27. Oh! that the chemist's magic art Rogers.
28. Come, melancholy Moraliser, come! - - - - - Southey.

29. Come smiles, come gay attire and hide - - - - - Anon.
30. I wish I was where Anna lies - - Gifford.

The purely descriptive ode, which luxuriantly indulges in the delineation of rural imagery, seems to have been little known to the ancients. Their Tragedians, indeed, have introduced abundance of mythological description, and some picturesque sketches into their choruses, more or less connected with the texture of their story, but there are few detached odes of Greek or Latin fame, which can properly take their rank in this class. It is probable, however, that SAPPHO had written several pieces of this kind, as an exquisitely descriptive fragment of an Ode to Evening has reached us, and excites our deepest sorrow that time should not have spared strains of such delicious flavour. It is preserved by Demetrius Phalereus, and merits quotation.

Εσπερε, παντα φερεις·
Φερεις οινο', φερεις αιγα,
Φερεις ματερι παιδα.

Vesper, omnia, fers;
Fers vinum, fers capram,
Fers matri filiam.

There are several passages in the Carmina of HORACE, also, which display much elegant colouring of the illustrative kind, but very few entire odes that can with propriety be termed

descriptive, that is, whose sole purport it is to dwell upon rural and picturesque beauty. The second of his Epodes, —

Beatus ille qui procul negotiis, —

the fourth ode of the first book, the thirteenth of the third Ad Fontem Blandusiæ, and one or two more, may be mentioned, which are nearly or altogether of this kind. Several of his odes likewise commence with vivid and well drawn scenery; at the fifth line, for instance, of the fourth of the third book, and the seventh and twelfth odes of the fourth book.

Dismissing, however, any farther considerations of the Roman, we will now pass forward to our own poets, among whom MILTON may be esteemed the model of, and the first who excelled in, what I would term the picturesque ode. His *L'Allegro ed Il Penseroso* are the most exquisite and accurately descriptive poems in his own, or any other language, and will probably for ever remain unrivalled. There is an unity in their design so admirably sustained, the imagery is so rich, and at the same time so well supported, that from its accumulation they operate an effect which scarce any other poem of the same class has successfully aspired to. In the *Grongar Hill* of DYER we have, likewise, a lyric effusion equally spirited and pleasing, and celebrated for the fidelity of its delineation; the commencement, however, is obscure and even ungrammatical, and his landscape not

sufficiently distinct, wanting what the artist would term proper keeping. It is nevertheless a very valuable poem, and has secured to its author an envied immortality. Let us now, once more adverting to the genius of COLLINS, remark, that in his address to Evening, he has presented us with the first fortunate specimen of the blank ode. Nothing but his own ode on the Popular Superstitions of the Highlands of Scotland can exceed the fine enthusiasm of this piece; the very spirit of Poussin and Claude breathe throughout the whole, mingled indeed with a wilder and more visionary train of idea, yet subdued and chastened by the softest tones of melancholy. Since its publication, many productions in lyric blank verse have been given to the public, and some possessed of very considerable merit; Mrs. BARBAULD's beautiful *Ode to Spring* may be considered as one of the happiest attempts toward the introduction of this species of metre. Collins's ode on the *Popular Superstitions*, after due precedence to that on the Passions, I esteem the noblest effort of his pen; but as I shall have occasion to quote it in a future sketch, and with some additional observations, I now proceed to mention a few other pieces which fall under this division. The *Il Bellicoso* and *Il Pacifico* of MASON are respectable imitations of Milton, especially the former, which abounds in nervous and strongly painted scenery; and the ode on the approach of Summer, commencing, *Hence, iron-scepter'd Winter, haste*, is another most admirable composition of

the same school. The ode, too, of GRAY, as finished by Mason, on the *Pleasure arising from Vicissitude*, is one of the choicest products of the lyre, a specimen of classical composition which the more it is studied will please the more. The lines on *Solitude* by GRAINGER, and SMOLLETT's little poem on *Leven Water*, have likewise a claim to particular distinction. Of the lyric works of our late POET LAUREAT, and of his classical BROTHER OF WINCHESTER, the odes entitled "*The Hamlet*," "*The First of April*," and "*To Fancy*," assume a distinguished rank in our catalogue, and are replete with characteristic and well selected touches of description. These, with a few additional pieces, when thrown together, will form a tissue of descriptive lyric poetry highly honourable to the taste and genius of our Bards.

ODES, CLASS III.

DESCRIPTIVE.

1. Hence, loathed Melancholy - Milton.
2. Hence, vain deluding joys - - Milton.
3. On Leven's banks, while free to rove - - - - - Smollett.
4. Silent Nymph, with curious eye Dyer.
5. If ought of oaten stop or pastoral song - - - - - Collins.
6. Home thou return'st from Thames, whose Naiads long Collins.
7. O Solitude, romantic maid - Grainger.

8. Now the golden morn aloft - - Gray & Mason.
9. Hence dull lethargic Peace - Mason.
10. Hence pestilential Mars - - Mason.
11. A muse unskill'd in venal praise Beattie.
12. O Parent of each lovely muse Warton, J.
13. Hail, meek-eyed maiden, clad in sober grey - - - - Warton, J.
14. The hinds how blest, who ne'er beguil'd - - - - Warton, T.
15. With dalliance rude young Zephyr wooes - - - Warton, T.
16. As Evening slowly spreads his mantle hoar - - - Warton, T.
17. Ah, mourn thy lov'd retreat! no more - - - - Warton, T.
18. O Thou, the Nymph with placid eye! - - - - Barbauld.
19. Sweet daughter of a rough and stormy sire - - - Barbauld.
20. Hence, iron-scepter'd Winter, haste - - - - Anon.
21. Bright stranger, welcome to my field - - - - Wolcot.
22. Born in yon blaze of orient light Darwin.
23. Gay child of Summer, who on burnish'd wings - - - Sayers.
24. Bright is the eastern sky — Aurora mounts - - - Sayers.

Love, that sweetest of all passions, has given birth in every age and nation to the strains of poesy; it has smoothed the asperities of the most rugged language, and taught even the savage to choose the most harmonious terms in expressing the tender tumult of his soul. From some specimens of the love-songs of the Laplanders it is astonishing with what beauty of

diction, with what exquisite pathos they have called forth the softest emotions of desire, and added also a charm which heightens all the rest, a simplicity, a naïveté peculiar to the first stages of society. Among the Greeks, the expression of amatory feeling has been cultivated with the happiest success, and the delicious remains of SAPPHO, which Venus

Quinta parte sui nectaris imbuit,

will for ever exist without a rival, for the melting harmony of her style, the warmth of her colouring, the tender and voluptuous languor with which they are imbued, render these fragments inimitable. Her ode, so well known to the Latin, French, and English reader by the translations of Catullus, Boileau, and Philips, I need not mention; but there is a fragment of hers quoted by Dr. Warton, which is of such superlative beauty that I cannot avoid placing it upon my paper: "it represents," observes the Doctor, "the languor and listlessness of a person deeply in love: we may suppose the fair author looking up earnestly on her mother, casting down the web on which she was employed, and suddenly exclaiming," *

Γλυκεια ματερ, ου τοι
Δυναμαι κρεκειν τον ιστον,
Ποθω δαμεισα παιδος
Βραδιναν δι Αφροδιταν †

* On the Writings and Genius of Pope, vol. i.

† Inter novem illustr. fœmin. fragmenta. Edit. à Fulvio Ursino, Antwerp.

Dulcis mater! non
Possum texere telum,
Amore victa pueri
Per acrem Venerem.

A striking subject for the pencil of the Artist! who might display his abilities in delineating the expression of voluptuous thought and tender sentiment in the speaking features of the love-sick Sappho.

In ANACREON there is little of tenderness, but an easy and a joyous gaiety, the enthusiasm of the grape pervade his songs; his descriptions, likewise, are delicate and just, yet his numerous imitators have usually sought for grossness of allusion, and the vulgar rant of intoxication, as sources of resemblance. It not being my intention, however, to arrange pieces of this kind, but rather those of a plaintive and more impassioned species, I pass on to notice the pathetic though licentious CATULLUS, whose sweetness and simplicity of style have been frequently and deservedly admired. Many of his poems breathe the very spirit of amorous satiety; he was profoundly skilled in Grecian literature, and drew from thence his choicest stores; that Sappho was his favourite, may be presumed from the version he has given us of her celebrated ode: and with what complacence must he have dwelt upon the compositions of Simonides! for that the most refined and tender feelings were familiar to the bosom of Catullus, his *Sirmio* and his elegiac pieces fully evince. As his poetry, however, will be the subject of another

paper, I shall only further observe that he has been copied by Gallus, by Joannes Secundus, by Muretus, &c.; and in the *Lydia* of the first of these poets may be found the origin of that exquisite song of Fletcher,

Take, O, take those lips away, &c.
Hide, O, hide those hills of snow, &c.

The passages in question have been rendered in so elegant a manner by the Translator of Secundus, that, with a slight alteration, I shall beg leave to introduce them along with their originals, to which however they are far superior.

Pande, Puella, geneas roseas,
Perfusas rubro purpureæ tyriæ.
Porrige labra, labra corallina;
Da columbatim mitia basia:
Sugis amentis partem animi. GALLUS.

Let a warmer crimson streak
The velvet of thy downy cheek:
Let thy lips that breathe perfume,
Deeper purple now assume,
Give me now one humid kiss,
Now repeat the melting bliss:
Soft, my Love! — my Angel! stay, —
Soft! — you suck my breath away.

Sinus expansa profert cinnama;
Undique surgunt ex te deliciæ.
Conde papillas, quæ me sauciant
Candore, et luxu nivei pectoris.
GALLUS.

Again, above its envious vest,
See, thy bosom heaves confest!
Hide the rapt'rous, dear delight!
Hide it from my ravish'd sight!
Hide it! — for thro' all my soul
Tides of madd'ning transport roll.

In HORACE, the gaiety of Anacreon, the empassioned strains of Sappho, and a vein of poetry peculiar to himself, are mingled, and with an effect that has given to enraptured taste some of the most elegant and beautiful odes of antiquity. His *Quis multa gracilis te puer in rosa* is, as Scaliger has justly observed, *Merum Nectar*, and the *Cum tu, Lydia, Telephi* has imbibed much of the spirit and sweetness of the fair Lesbian. Over the eleventh ode of the third book, the celebrated Dialogue of Horace and Lydia, what reader has not hung enamoured! it is a poem consecrated to the Graces, a flower from the Paradise of the Muses bathed in their most fragrant dew.

If in any branch of lyric poetry the inferiority of the moderns be evident, it is in this, and it must be confessed that we can bring forward no production in merit equal to the ode of Sappho; yet shall we be able to collect some little pieces of high value to the lover of nature and simplicity. A few of our early poets have greatly excelled in the amatory song, and HARRINGTON, better than two centuries ago, published one, which is entitled to very distinguished praise. The talents, too, of GEORGE WITHER, which are much undervalued, were employed in this department with

success; and the stanzas inserted by Dr. Percy in his *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*,

Hence away, thou Syren, leave me,
Pish! unclasp these wanton arms, &c. &c.

are the offspring of no inferior genius. FLETCHER's little song I have already mentioned: descending, therefore, to a more recent period, the pathetic strains of THOMSON, PERCY, and GOLDSMITH, arrest our notice, and claim our warmest admiration. Some pieces of Mrs. BARBAULD's also, and the *Braes of Yarrow* by LOGAN, will be highly relished: the fourth stanza of the latter poem is strikingly beautiful and tender.

His mother from the window look'd
With all the longing of a mother;
His little sister weeping walk'd
The green wood path to meet her brother;
They sought him east, they sought him west,
They sought him all the forest thorough;—
They only saw the cloud of night,
They only heard the roar of Yarrow!

ODES, CLASS IV.

AMATORY.

1. Whence comes my love, O hearte, disclose - - - - - Harrington.
2. Hence away, thou Syren, leave me Wither.
3. Drink to me only with thine eyes - Jonson.

4. Ask me why I send you here - - Carew.
5. Take, O, take those lips away - - Fletcher.
6. The heavy hours are almost past - Lyttelton.
7. O Nightingale, best poet of the grove - - - - - Thomson.
8. Tell me, thou soul of her I love - Thomson.
9. Thy fatal shafts unerring love - Smollett.
10. When Sappho tun'd the enraptur'd strain - - - - - Smollett.
11. Too plain, dear Youth, these tell-tale eyes - - - - Jenyns.
12. When lovely woman stoops to folly Goldsmith.
13. O Nancy, wilt thou go with me - Percy.
14. Ah! the shepherd's mournful fate Hamilton.
15. If in that breast so good, so pure - Moore.
16. Thy braes were bonny, Yarrow stream - - - - - Logan.
17. Come here, fond youth, whoe'er thou be - - - - - Barbauld.
18. Sister of Phœbus, gentle Queen - Miss F***
19. From thy waves stormy Lannow I fly - - - - - - Seward.
20. What tho' I'm told that Flora's face Sayers.
21. Once more, enchanting girl, adieu! Rogers.
22. Sweet flowers! that from your humble beds - - - Gifford.
23. Say, have you in the valley seen - Anon.
24. I have a silent sorrow here - - Sheridan.

I have thus, in a brief manner, considered the merits of our English lyric poets, and attempted to prove, that in the *Sublime*, *Pathetic*, and *Descriptive Ode* they are *not inferior* to the ancients, and in the *Amatory* make a *near* approach to their models. For this purpose, under their respective departments, I have enumerated many of our best productions,

and it will not, I should imagine, be disputed, that they form together a body of lyric poetry of undoubted excellence,

> Together dart their intermingled rays
> And dazzle with a luxury of light.* GRAY.

* In drawing the comparison between ancient and modern lyric poetry, I have not thought it necessary to notice, except in the instances of Secundus and Gallus, the modern writers of Latin verse. I cannot conclude this sketch, however, without declaring that many of the Odes of CASIMIR SORBIEWSKY are worthy of the genius of Horace. I select the following as a specimen, and append to it the very elegant translation of Mr. Heald.

AD SUAM TESTUDINEM.

Sonori buxi filia sutilis,
Pendebis alta, barbite, populo;
Dum ridet aer, et supinas
Solicitat levis aura frondes.
Te sibilantis lenior halitus
Perflabit Euri: me juvet interim
Collum reclinasse, et virenti
Sic temerè jacuisse ripa.
Eheu! Serenum quæ nebulæ tegunt
Repente cœlum? quis sonus imbrium?
Surgamus. Heu semper fugaci
Gaudia præteritura passu! Lib. ii.

In the high-towering poplar thus swinging,
My lyre, hung suspended at ease;
Thy strings, at wild intervals, ringing,
When swept by the breath of the breeze.

The blue vault its full beauty displaying,
Not a cloud the pure ether o'ershades,
And in sighs his soft wishes betraying,
The green foliage fond zephyr pervades.

Thus I leave thee to murmur and quiver,
As whispers the slow-rising wind;
While here, stretch'd on the banks of the river,
I repose, in light dreams reclin'd.

As an humble appendage to these strictures, I have ventured to introduce an original ode. It opens with a very bold prosopopœia, but which will not, the author trusts, be thought too daring for the subject.

THE STORM.

AN ODE.

Heard ye the Whirlwind's flight sublime,
Swift as the rushing wing of Time;
The Demon rag'd aloud!
Vaunting he rear'd his giant form,
And tower'd amid the gath'ring storm,
Borne on a murky cloud;
Vast horror shook the dome of heav'n,
As 'neath him far with fury driv'n,
The viewless depths of air,
Stern o'er the struggling globe he past,
While pausing Nature shrank aghast,
And thro' the troubled gloom wild yell'd the fiend Despair.

Ha! along yon horizon dark scowling,
What tempest-fed shadows appear!
Clouds! clouds! rise incessantly rolling;
Hark! the show'r whistles loud on mine ear.

O my harp, my companion, my treasure,
Let us rise, let us hasten away:
'Tis thus flies the phantom of pleasure,
With quick step ever hasting away.

Servant of God! destructive Power!
Whilst due to wrath the direful hour,
Thou warn'st a guilty world,
When bursts to vengeance heav'n's blest Sire,
When lightens fierce the Almighty's ire,
On sin-struck nations hurl'd;
Thy terrors load my trembling shell,
Dread as the madd'ning tones that swell
O'er yonder bleak domain,
Where heaves thy deep, incessant roar,
That shakes the snow-topt mountain hoar;
And with resistless ruin strews th' affrighted plain.

Ah! what of hope's delicious ray,
As slow the Pilgrim takes his way,
Shall soothe his sinking soul,
As round him forms infernal rise,
Of ghastly hue, whose hideous cries
Thro' the vext ether roll,
And mingling in each surf-worn cave,
Fell spirits from the murderer's grave,
The deed of horror hail;
Saw ye the redd'ning meteor gleam?
Heard ye, with harsh and hollow scream,
Far o'er the dim cold sea the birds of ocean wail?

Fierce o'er the darkly-heaving waves,
The storm with boundless fury raves,
The Sailor starts aghast,
His helm, to ruthless vengeance giv'n,
O'er the vast surge speeds idly driv'n,
As shrieks the hurrying blast:
Cease, Emma, cease to hope in vain,
Thou e'er wilt view thy Lord again,

He never shall return!
Pale on the desert shore he lies!
No Wife belov'd to close his eyes,
No Friend in pitying tones his wave-drench'd limbs
to mourn!

Hark! how the rough winds madd'ning sweep,
Bare the broad earth, and drifting deep,
The boreal deluge raise!
Here mountains shoot their wreath-tipt heads,
Here lo! far sunk, the valley spreads
Her drear, her wild'ring maze!
O, come, let's brave the northern blast,
Let's mark stupendous nature cast
In many a form sublime,
I care not if, where Hecla towers,
Where wrapt in tempests Winter lowers
Stern on her ice-clad throne, I trace the hoary
clime.

Protect me, heav'n; 'neath yon huge drift,
Where to the clouds the wild winds lift
The waste in horror pil'd,
See, where yon shiv'ring female lies!
Lo! on her fainting bosom dies
Cold, cold, her infant child!
Daughter of woe! then doubly dear!
O'er thy sad fate how many a tear
The hapless mother shed!
And must we, cried she, must we part?
Then clasp'd thee to her shudd'ring heart,
Whilst in convulsive sighs thy little spirit fled.

O thou, who rul'st the fleeting year,
Who giv'st to roll the varied sphere,
Amid the vast of heav'n,
Now, Father, bend thine awful ear!
O, bless me with a parent's care,
To thy protection giv'n;

Whether on ocean's bosom thrown,
Or plung'd where snow-clad mountains frown,
If thou my hallow'd guide,
I heed not; let the tempest roar,
Let Havoc and wild Winter hoar,
And Terror's giant form the dark-brow'd Whirlwind ride.

No. XXVI.

Tantum parva suo debet Verona CATULLO,
Quantum magna suo Mantua Virgilio.

THIS celebrated poet, notwithstanding his licentious freedoms, will ever rank high in the estimation of the elegant scholar. It is indeed to be regretted that among poems which boast the utmost felicity of diction, and breathe the most tender and delicious sentiment, should be intermixed pieces which not only tinge the cheek of modesty, but repel every reader by their gross physical impurities. It were devoutly to be wished that his late ingenious Translator *, instead of presenting the public with the entire works of Catullus, had formed a collection of those productions only which are free from these defects. I will venture to affirm that all that is valuable in this poet would then have been preserved; and a volume, unparalleled perhaps for its amatory and pathetic excellence, opened to every age and to both sexes. At present this translation, unpurged as it is from the disgusting improprieties of the

* Vide Poems of Caius Valerius Catullus in English Verse, printed for Johnson, 1795, 2 vols. 8vo.

original, can only meet a partial circulation. Voluptuous ideas in a young poet when clothed in fascinating language will, as in Catullus, receive pardon, but to conception at which even Swift would have sickened, what mercy can be conceded! Let the Translator, whose version, if we overlook some inaccurate rhymes, possesses very considerable merit, but exercise his taste in selection, and with occasional notes, parallel passages, and imitations, of which latter great numbers truly excellent exist, he will assuredly form a work equal in bulk to his present, and of universal attraction.

In spite of the blemishes we have alluded to in many of these compositions, and which the unrestrained customs and manners of antiquity in some measure mitigate, Catullus possessed a very amiable and feeling heart, greatly loved, and was equally beloved by, his friends, was a dutiful son, and a most affectionate brother.

Sweetness and perspicuity of style, tenderness and simplicity of thought, a naïveté of manner peculiarly his own, and often a vividity and minuteness of description truly delightful, are the characteristics of the better portion of his works. I cannot, however, with his Translator, esteem his satirical effusions excellent, much less that this mode of composition was his forte. They abound in the coarsest invective, and are generally levelled at the personal deformities and nauseous defects of those whom he hated. With the exception of about half-a-dozen pieces, they are alike di graceful to the poet and the man.

His elegiac, descriptive, and the greatest part of his amatory poetry, make however ample amends. A warm lover of Grecian literature, he has thrown into his style many of the beautiful expressions and idioms of that noble language; these melt with so much sweetness into the texture of his composition, so aptly express the impassioned ideas of his amorous muse, that they have given a peculiarly delicate and mellow air to his diction, and for this, probably, more than for any other quality, he obtained, among his contemporaries, the appellation of *Doctus*.

Sappho, *Simonides*, and *Callimachus* appear to have been his chief favourites; from the former he has translated the ode so well known in the version of Phillips, and to the pathos of Simonides he has borne testimony in his lovely *Carmen Ad Cornificium*, a gem of such exquisite water that I am under the obligation of introducing it to the reader's admiration. *

AD CORNIFICIUM.

Male est, Cornifici, tuo Catullo;
Malè est mehercule, et laboriosè:
Magìsque, et magìs, in dias et horas.
Irascor tibi: sic meos amores?
Quem tu, quod minimum facillimúmque est,
Quâ solatus es adlocutione?
Paulum quidlibet adlocutionis,
Mœstius lacrymis Simonideis. *

* Carm. 35

These lines, his Translator has thus happily given:

TO CORNIFICIUS.

Hard, Cornificius, I declare,
Hard is the lot I'm doom'd to bear!
And ev'ry day, and ev'ry hour,
I live but to endure the more!
My injur'd heart indignant burns;
Why meets my love such cold returns?
Say tho' thy words can sweetly flow,
Have they once sooth'd my bosom's woe?
Words, moving as those tearful lays
Which sang the sad Simonides!

From *Callimachus*, the poet of Verona has taken his *Coma Berenices*; and his *Carmen de Ally* is most probably a translation from the Greek, and the only specimen we have in Latin of the *Galliambic* metre: it is written with so much energy and enthusiasm that Dr. Warton does not hesitate to place it at the head of Roman poetry, and in this opinion he is supported by the suffrage of Mr. Gibbon.* To do justice to a composition so pregnant with poetic fire, and upon a subject so peculiarly delicate and singular, calls for powers of no common construction, not only for great fertility and vigour in poetic expression, but for great skill and address in naturalizing an incident so difficult to detail with dignity and

* See the Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope, and Gibbon's Roman Empire, vol. ii. chap. xxiii. note 18.

grace. Mr. Beloe was the first, I believe, who attempted to transfuse into English the beauties of this striking production *: his version is very elegant; but, though designedly a paraphrase, the licence has been carried too far, and the poem consequently falls somewhat short of the strength and spirit of the original. The last translator has perhaps, in point of energy and compression, succeeded better. The complaint of Atys, when awakened to the recollection of his misery, is certainly unequalled in the compass of Roman literature: grief the most impassioned reigns throughout his speech, and strongly excites the commiseration of the reader. A small, but very beautiful portion of this plaintive poem, with the translation of 1795, I shall insert here as a specimen of the unique original, and of the merits of the version. Atys is represented on the sea-shore, overwhelmed with sorrow and remorse, and casting his eyes, bathed in tears, over the ocean, thus addresses his native country:

Patria ô mea creatrix, patria ô mea genitrix,
Ego quam miser relinquens, dominos ut herifugæ
Famuli solent, ad Idæ tetuli nemora pedem!
Ut apud nivem, et ferarum gelida stabula forem,
Et ut omnia earum adirem, furibunda, latibula:
Ubinam, aut quibus locis te positam, patria rear?
Cupit ipsa pupula ad te sibi dirigere aciem,
Rabie ferâ carens dum breve tempus animus est.
Egóne à meâ remota hæc ferar in nemora domo?
Patria, bonis, amicis, genitoribus abero?

* Vide Beloe's Miscellanies, vol. i

Dear, parent soil! from whence I've dar'd to roam,
Like some poor slave that flies his master's home;
Wretch that I am! have madly dar'd to go
Where lurid forests frown on Ida's brow,
'Mid snows, and where fierce beasts in dampness dwell,
Seeking, infuriate, each wild monster's cell:
O, where dost thou, my native country, lie?
Thee in what distant spot shall fancy spy?
Fain, for that little space from madness free,
Would mine eyes fix their straining balls on thee:
O lost, O banish'd from my pleasing home!
These foreign woods must I for ever roam?
Quit all I have, my friends, my natal earth,
Distant from those who gave my being birth?

Few productions of Catullus place in a more striking light the tender and affectionate disposition of their author than the *Carmen ad Sirmionem Peninsulam*. The pleasure he expresses on returning to his little villa, and on the prospect of again reclining on his accustomed couch; his invocation to the Peninsula, and his fond request that every thing he has should join in welcoming him home, are strong indications of the domestic virtues. His poem *De Nuptiis Pelei et Thetidos*, the most elaborate in the collection, is worthy of the genius of Virgil, and displays much accurate description, and much pathetic and impassioned incident. The episode of Theseus and Ariadne has been justly admired; her lamentations, when ungratefully abandoned by Theseus as she slept, are the very dictates of Love and Nature. The Carmina *De Acme et Septimio*, and *Ad Calvum de*

Quintilia, as well as most of the pieces addressed to *Lesbia*, have as amatory and tender effusions never been surpassed. The lines addressed to Calvus, for the originality and beauty of the thought, merit transcription.

AD CALVUM DE QUINTILIA.

Si quicquam mutis gratum acceptúmve sepulchris
Accidere à nostro, Calve, dolore potest,
Cùm desiderio veteres renovamus amores,
Atque olim missas flemus amicitias;
Certè non tanto mors immatura dolori est
Quintiliæ, quantùm gaudet amore tuo.*

TO CALVUS, ON QUINTILIA.

If ever to the dumb, sepulchral urn,
The tribute of a tear could grateful prove;
What time each recollected scene we mourn,
Each deed of ancient friendship and of love:

Less sure, fond youth, must thy Quintilia grieve
That she by death's cold hand untimely fell;
Than joys her parted spirit to perceive
How much her Calvus lov'd her, and how well!

Many of the poems of Catullus possess likewise the sportive and convivial spirit of Horace; I would particularly point out the following:—*Ad Fabullum. Ad Calvum Licinium. Cæcilium Invitat. Ad Licinium. Ad Camerium.*

The *Julii et Manlii Epithalamium*, and the

* Carm. 91.

Carmen Nuptiale, have just claims to distinguished praise; the two similes in the latter poem commencing, "*Ut flos in septis secretus nascitur hortis,*" and "*Ut vidua in nudo vitis quæ nascitur arvo,*" do the highest honour to the poet's genius, and shew the utmost felicity in the choice and management of diction and versification. The two poems also *Ad Seipsum* are elegantly plaintive: but no Carmina in the collection interest so deeply the feelings of the reader, and impress him with equal esteem for the Bard, as those addressed *Ad Hortalum*, *Ad Manlium*, and the little effusion *De Inferiis Ad Fratris Tumulum*. Here pure affection, clothed in the most exquisite poetry, laments the loss of a beloved brother. So beautifully tender are these charming passages, and so admirably have they been translated, so much honour do they confer upon the author's head and heart, and so greatly therefore will they operate in his favour, that to decorate my pages by their insertion becomes almost an indispensable duty.

It was during the expedition of Catullus into Bithynia that his brother died, and was buried on the Trojan promontory of Rhæteum, famed as the Sepulchre of Ajax Telamon. The following lines were sent to *Hortalus*, accompanied by a translation from Callimachus, which Catullus had for some time neglected finishing on account of his brother's death.

Etsi me assiduo confectum cura dolore
Sevocat à doctis, Hortale, virginibus;
Nec potis est dulces Musarum expromere fœtus
Mens animi; tantis fluctuat ipsa malis:

Namque mei nuper Lethæo gurgite fratris
Pallidulum manans alluit unda pedem;
Troïa Rhæteo quem subter litore tellus
Ereptum nostris obterit ex oculis.—
Nunquam ego te, vitâ frater amabilior,
Aspiciam posthac? at certè semper amabo,
Semper mœsta tuâ carmina morte legam:
Qualia sub densis ramorum concinit umbris
Daulias, absumpti fata gemens Ityli. *

O Hortalus! with wasting cares opprest,
I live sequester'd from the tuneful Nine;
Nor can the Muse, while sorrow racks my breast,
Prompt the gay thought, or form the flowing line.

I a fond brother's heart-felt loss deplore,
Whose clay-cold feet dark Lethe's waters lave;
Beside fam'd Rhætium, on the Trojan shore,
Rest his cold relics in the peaceful grave.

E'en than my life, O brother, dearer far!
Say, never shall I view thy form again?
In love at least thou wilt be always dear;
Still shalt thou live in sorrow's tender strain.

Still will I sing thee, as the bird of eve
Sings sweetly-lorn upon her tufted seat;
'Mid shades of darkest foliage pleas'd to grieve,
To mourn unhappy Ity's barb'rous fate!

In the elegy to Manlius, which is certainly a first-rate production, the poet refers again to his fraternal loss as an excuse for not sending to his friend some of the sportive effusions he had petitioned for; he observes:

* Carm. 62.

Tempore quo primùm vestis mihi tradita pura est,
Jucundum cùm ætas florida ver ageret,
Multa satìs lusi: non est dea nescia nostrî,
Quæ dulcem curis miscet amaritiem.
Sed totum hoc studium luctu fraterna mihi mors
Abscidit. O misero frater adempte mihi!
Tu mea, tu moriens fregisti commoda, frater:
Tecum unà tota est nostra sepulta domus:
Omnia tecum unà perierunt gaudia nostra,
Quæ tuus in vitâ dulcis alebat amor!
Cujus ego in interitu totâ de mente fugavi
Hæc studia, atque omnes delicias animi.*

When manhood's vest that boasts no blushing hue
I first put on, in life's fresh blooming spring:
Then the delicious pangs of love I knew;
Of rapture much and various did I sing.

But, O my much-lov'd brother, since thou'rt dead,
No more my leisure these gay trifles grace!
With thee the train of rosy pleasures fled,
With thee too fled the glories of our race!

Perish'd with thee are all those dear delights,
Nurs'd by thy tender friendship's holy flame;
Each fav'rite study now no more invites,
No more of rapture's softest bliss I dream.

Introducing the story of Laodamia and Protesilāus, he is led to mention the celebrated siege of Troy: this recalling his brother's untimely fate, he bursts forth into the following animated and pathetic exclamation:

Troïa nefas, commune sepulchrum Asiæ Europæque,
Troïa virûm et virtutum omnium acerba cinis;

* Carm. 65.

Quæ nempe et nostro lethum miserabile fratri
Attulit, hei misero frater adempte mihi!
Hei misero fratri jucundum lumen ademptum!
Tecum unà tota est nostra sepulta domus;
Omnia tecum unà perierunt gaudia nostra,
Quæ tuus in vitâ dulcis alebat amor!
Quem nunc tam longè non inter nota sepulcra,
Nec prope cognatos compositum cineres,
Sed Troiâ obscœnâ, Troiâ infelice sepultum
Detinet extremo terra aliena solo.*

Accursed Troy, of Europe's sons the grave,
Of Asia's noblest chiefs the common tomb!
Where sleep the ashes of the wise, and brave;
Where a lov'd brother met an early doom!

Ah, long-lost brother, whom I yet bewail!
With thee the glories of our race are o'er:
And each fond hope that in life's tearful vale
Thy tender friendship cherish'd, is no more!

No kindred urn thy honour'd ashes boast;
Beside no lov'd relation art thou laid;
On Troy's ill-fated, Troy's detested coast,
Far from thy country sleeps thy hapless shade!

On the return of our Bard from Bithynia into Italy, he paused at the tomb of his brother, and with unfeigned sorrow offered his sacrifices to the manes of the deceased. The celebration of the melancholy rite he has immortalized in a lovely little poem, and with this affectionate oblation to the memory of the lamented youth we close our quotations from Catullus:

* Carm. 65.

DE INFERIIS AD FRATRIS TUMULUM.

Multas per gentes, et multa per æquora vectus
Advenio has miseras, frater, ad inferias;
Ut te postremo donarem munere mortis,
Et mutum nequicquam alloquerer cinerem;
Quando quidem fortuna mihi te te abstulit ipsum.
Heu miser indignè frater adempte mihi!
Nunc tamen interea prisco quæ more parentum
Tradita sunt tristes munera ad inferias,
Accipe fraterno multùm manantia fletu;
Atque in perpetuum, frater, ave, atque vale. *

ON THE FUNERAL CEREMONIES AT HIS BROTHER'S TOMB.

Thro' various realms, o'er various seas I come,
To see that each due sacrifice be paid,
To bring my last sad offering to the tomb,
And thy mute dust invoke, fraternal shade!

Yes, hapless brother! since the hand of fate
Hath snatch'd thee ever from my longing sight;
As us'd our ancestors, in solemn state
I'll bring each mystic gift, each funeral rite.

With many a tear I will the ground bedew ——
Spirit of him I lov'd those tears receive!
Spirit of him I valued most, adieu!
Adieu to him who sleeps in yonder grave!

Ireland and Britain may boast of two poets who have rivalled Catullus in the most amiable part of his character, in the beauty and tenderness of their tributes to fraternal friendship.

* Carm. 96

GOLDSMITH addresses his admirable poem, *The Traveller*, to his Brother, the Rev. Henry Goldsmith, "a man," he says, "who, despising fame and fortune, had retired early to happiness and obscurity, with an income of forty pounds a year." To this worthy disciple of the humble Founder of Christianity, the following lines will bear merited testimony as long as the language of our island shall exist:—

Remote, unfriended, melancholy, slow
Or by the lazy Scheld, or wand'ring Po;
Or onward, where the rude Carinthian boor
Against the houseless stranger shuts the door;
Or where Campania's plain forsaken lies,
A weary waste expanding to the skies;
Where'er I roam, whatever realms to see,
My heart untravell'd fondly turns to thee,
Still to my brother turns with ceaseless pain,
And drags at each remove a lengthening chain.
Eternal blessings crown my earliest friend,
And round his dwelling guardian saints attend!
Blest be that spot, where cheerful guests retire
To pause from toil, and trim their evening fire;
Blest that abode, where want and pain repair,
And every stranger finds a ready chair!
Blest be those feasts, with simple plenty crown'd,
Where all the ruddy family around
Laugh at the jests or pranks that never fail,
Or sigh with pity at some mournful tale;
Or press the bashful stranger to his food,
And learn the luxury of doing good!

In the *Pleasures of Memory*, by Mr. ROGERS, a production, which in sweetness of versification and beauty of imagery may vie with any

effort of the modern muses, the poet thus pathetically invokes the Spirit of his departed brother: —

O thou! with whom my heart was wont to share
From reason's dawn each pleasure and each care;
With whom, alas! I fondly hop'd to know
The humble walks of happiness below;
If thy blest nature now unites above
An angel's pity with a brother's love,
Still o'er my life preserve thy mild control,
Correct my views, and elevate my soul:
Grant me thy peace and purity of mind,
Devout yet cheerful, active yet resign'd;
Grant me, like thee, whose heart knew no disguise,
Whose blameless wishes never aim'd to rise,
To meet the changes Time and Chance present,
With modest dignity and calm content.
When thy last breath, ere Nature sunk to rest,
Thy meek submission to thy God express'd;
When thy last look, ere thought and feeling fled,
A mingled gleam of hope and triumph shed;
What to thy soul its glad assurance gave,
Its hope in death, its triumph o'er the grave? —
The sweet Remembrance of unblemish'd youth,
The inspiring voice of Innocence and Truth!

No poet has been honoured with more imitators than Catullus. Among the ancients, *Propertius*, *Tibullus*, *Ovid*, and *Martial*; among the moderns, *Joannes Secundus*, *Bonefonius*, *Flaminio*, and *Dorat*, have greatly benefited by his labours. "In Flaminio," pronounces an elegant and accomplished critic, "we have the simplicity and tenderness of Catullus, without his licentiousness. To those who are acquainted with his writings, it will not be thought

extravagant to assert, that many of them, in the species of composition to which they were confined, were never excelled. The question addressed by him to a friend respecting the writings of Catullus, *Quando leggete — non vi sentite voi liquefare il cuore di dolcezza?* may with confidence be repeated to all those who are conversant with his works." *

The *Basia* of Secundus have many beauties, and are written in the spirit of the Veronese poet; Basium iii. and Basium xiv. are truly delicious. The fragment also *Ad Lydiam*, attributed to Cornelius Gallus, and published with the poems of Secundus, breathes all the ardours and tumultuous wishes of the lover, in language exquisitely sweet and polished.

Various imitations, too, translations, and paraphrases, of the more pleasing Carmina of Catullus, are to be found dispersed through numerous collections of English poetry, and among the opuscula of many of our poets. Between twenty and thirty years ago, a work was published under the title of *Sentimental Tales*, and which contains many very elegant and spirited versions from Catullus. The author has with much ingenuity woven the loves of Catullus and Lesbia into a well connected but fictitious story; and in 1793, Mr. Kendall of Exeter presented the public with a volume of poems of considerable merit, among which are several happy translations from the Bard of Verona.

* Roscoe's Life of Lorenzo Di Medici the Magnificent.

From the specimens now given, we may, without danger of contradiction, assert of Catullus, that no writer of ancient Italy possessed a greater facility of awakening the sweetest emotions of pity and of love; and that his descriptive powers would not suffer by a comparison with those of Lucretius and Virgil, might be proved, had we leisure, from his Carmen *De Nuptiis Pelei et Thetidos*, which is of high value for its circumstantial and picturesque imagery.

That a volume so estimable in many respects, should be disgraced by the *coarsest* obscenity and the *most* impure allusion, will ever be a cause of regret; but that these should be thought deserving of a translation, is, assuredly, to adopt the mildest language, a gross error of judgment. Let it be repeated therefore, that the Translator would confer no small obligation upon the public, by presenting it with an edition freed from these disgusting blemsihes. *

* I have lately received a letter from the ingenious translator, who informs me, it is his intention, should another edition be called for, to pursue the plan recommended in this Essay.

No. XXVII.

O Thou! who sleep'st where hazel bands entwine
The vernal grass, with paler violets drest,
I would, sweet girl! thy humble bed were mine,
And mine, thy calm and enviable rest.
For never more, by human ills opprest,
Shall thy soft spirit fruitlessly repine:
Thou canst not now thy fondest hope resign
Even in the hour that should have made thee blest.
Light lies the turf upon thy "gentle" breast;
And lingering here, to love and sorrow true,
The youth, who once thy simple heart possest,
Shall mingle tears with April's early dew;
While still for him, shall faithful Memory save
Thy form and virtues from the silent grave.

CHARLOTTE SMITH.

May 15. 1790.

It is three years since I resided at the village of Ruysd—le, a few hamlets picturesquely situated on the banks of the rapid Sw—le. Here, under a humble roof, and hard by the village church, dwelt the worthy but unfortunate Frederick Arnold, the curate of a simple flock, and Maria, the gentle and modest Maria, his only daughter. Frederick, when I first knew him, was near sixty, a man of considerable judgment, and great sensibility of heart; his religion was pure and rational, and his

charity extensive; for although the curacy was but small, yet, by temperance and economy, he contrived to bestow more than those of thrice his property. His manners were mild and engaging, his features expressive, and, when he spoke to the distressed, his eyes beamed a sweetness I shall never forget. By this mode of conduct he became the father of the village, not a soul within it but would willingly have sacrificed his happiness to oblige my amiable friend. Methinks I see him now walking across the green that spreads from the parsonage to the water's side; here, if the morning proved a fine one, would the young men and maidens of the village assemble to salute their pastor, and happy were they who, in return for a few flowers, or any other little testimony of their esteem, received a nod, a smile, or phrase of gratulation. Here also would his daughter often come, attendant on her father, whom if, in my veneration for his character, I could accuse of any fault, it was in a too doating fondness for this lovely girl, who, had she not been blessed with an excellent disposition, would certainly have been injured by it. Maria Arnold was then eighteen, and though not handsome, yet was there a softness and expression in her countenance far superior to any regularity of feature; her eyes were dark, full, and liquid; her lips red and prominent; her hair of a deep brown; her complexion pale, but, when rather heated, a delicate suffusion overspread her cheek; and her person, although somewhat large, was elegant and well-formed.

To these external graces were superadded the much more valuable ones of suavity of disposition and tenderness of heart. Maria wept not only at the tale of fiction, at the sufferings of injured beauty, or of graceful heroism; her pity and her bounty were extended to the loathsome scenes of squalid poverty and pale disease. Behold yon little cot, the woodbine winding over its mossy thatch! how often in that little cot have I seen her soothe the torture of convulsive agony; see! one hand supports that old man's hoary head; his languid eyes are fixed on hers, and feebly, as the gushing tear pours down his withered cheek, he blesses the compassionate Maria. Thou gentle being! ever in the hour of pensive solitude, when fled from cares that vex my spirit, ever did I call to mind thy modest virtues; even now, whilst musing on the scenes of Ruysd—le; even now my fancy draws the very room, where, when the evening closed the labours of the weary villager, the conversation or the music of Maria added rapture to the social hour. It was plain, I remember, but elegant, and ornamented with some sketches of Maria's in aqua tinta; at one end stood her harpsichord, and near it a mahogany case of well-chosen books; one window looked upon the green, and the other, the upper panes of which were overspread by the intermingling fibres of a jessamine tree, had the view of a large garden, where the fortunate combination of use and picturesque beauty took place under the direction of my friend. Here, the window-shutters closed, and the candles brought

in, would Arnold, sitting in his arm-chair, and the tear of fondness starting in his eye, listen to the melting sweetness of Maria's voice, or, conversing on subjects of taste and morality, instruct, whilst he highly entertained his willing auditors.

It was in one of these solitary moments of reflection, when the mind feeds on past pleasure with a melancholy joy, that I determined to take the first opportunity of once more seeing my much-loved Arnold and his daughter, and it is three weeks since, having prepared every thing for the purpose, I left my house early in the morning; my heart throbbed with impatience; and full of anticipation, I promised myself much and lasting happiness. Occupied by these flattering ideas, I arrived on the afternoon of the third day within a mile of Ruysd—le. It had been gloomy for some time, and during the last hour, there fell much and heavy rain, which increasing rapidly, and the thunder being heard on the hills, I rode up to a farm-house within a few paces of the road. Here I met with a cordial welcome from the master of the humble mansion, whom I had known at Ruysd—le, and for whom I had a sincere regard; he shook me heartily by the hand, and sate me down to his best fare; and having dried my clothes, and taken some refreshment, I told him the purport of my journey, that I had come to see the good curate and his daughter. Scarce had I finished the sentence, when the poor man burst into tears: "Thomas," I exclaimed, "what is the matter? you alarm me!"

"Ah, your honour! I must needs give way to it, else my heart would break; we've had sad work, I'm sure your honour would never have gotten over it. Master Arnold—"—"What of Arnold, is he ill?" "No, your honour."—"What then?"—"But Miss Maria—"—"What of her?"—"Miss Maria, your honour, poor Miss Maria is to be buried to-morrow morning; there is not a dry eye in the village; she was so kind and charitable to the poor, and spoke so sweetly, that we all loved her as if she had been our own child. Ah! many a time and oft have I seen her weep when poor folks were distressed and ill. 'Thomas,' would she say, for she often came down, your honour, when my wife lay badly, 'Thomas, how does Mary do? Don't be out of spirits, for what with my nursing and yours, Thomas, she'll soon be better.' And then she would sit down by the bed-side and speak so sweetly that I cannot help crying when I think on't. God knows! she has been cruelly dealt by, and, if your honour will give me leave, I'll tell you all about it." I bowed my head, and the farmer went on with his relation. "About a twelvemonth after your honour left us, 'Squire Stafford's lady, of H—t—n Hall, died, and the young Miss being melancholy for want of company, Miss Maria went to stay there for some time; they were fast friends, and very fond of each other. Now, Mr. Henry, the young 'Squire, who came from College on his mother's death, and who, to say the truth, is the handsomest and best-natured gentleman I ever set

eyes on, what should he do but fall in love with Miss Maria, and wanted to marry her; but the old gentleman, who, as I heard, never had a good word in the country, and who, God forgive me! I believe is no better than he should be, fell into a violent passion, and stamped and raved like a madman, and made Mr. Henry promise not to think any thing more about it. So all remained quiet for a great while; but Miss Maria was not forgot, your honour, for whilst she was upon a second visit at the 'Squire's, about four months ago, Mr. Henry tried to carry her off, but the servants were too nimble for them, and they were brought back again, and then there were sad doings indeed: Miss Maria fell into fits; and Mr. Henry, after having had a terrible quarrel with his father, was sent to Dover the next morning, and ordered to embark for France. A very short time, your honour, after Mr. Henry had been gone, poor Miss Maria was discovered to be with child, and the 'Squire, in spite of all the tears and entreaties of his daughter, turned Miss Maria out of doors, nor would he let her have the chaise, but locking up Miss Stafford, obliged her to walk home by herself, and, your honour knows, it is ten long miles. All this was done in such a hurry that nobody knew of it here; and one fine sun-shiny evening, as we were dancing upon the green before the parsonage-house, for it was always our custom, as your honour knows, a young woman very neatly dressed appeared at one end of the village; she was faint and weary,

and sitting herself down began to cry; we all left off dancing and went to see what was the matter: but, alas! who should it be but poor Miss Maria, — oh, I shall never forget it the longest day I have to live; her hands were clasped together, and her eyes were turned towards heaven; she looked like an angel, your honour; we none of us could speak to her, but we all wept, and then she gave a great sigh and fell upon the ground. But, alack-a-day! whilst we were endeavouring to bring Miss Maria to life again, somebody having told Mr. Arnold, he came running breathless and almost distracted to the place, and taking his daughter in his arms, he looked upon her in such a manner, and then upon us, and then towards heaven, that it almost broke our hearts, for he could not speak, your honour, his heart was so full he could not speak; but just at this moment Miss Maria opened her eyes, and seeing her father, she shrieked and fell into strong fits; he started, and snatching her hastily up, ran towards the parsonage, and here, the fits continuing, she miscarried. As for poor Mr. Arnold, he was quite overcome, and he wept and took on so sorely that we thought he would never have got the better of it. 'O my Maria!' he said, 'you have killed your poor father, you have bowed him with sorrow to the grave;' and then he knelt down by the bed-side; 'forsake me not, my God!' he cried, 'in mine old age, when I am gray-headed, forsake me not when my strength faileth me!' He then got up to comfort

Miss Maria, but she would not be comforted, and kept crying, her dear father could not forgive her; but he said he could, and kissed her, and then she wept a great deal, and was quiet. All the village, by this time, had got round the parsonage, and there was not a single soul, your honour, but what was in tears; we all put up our prayers for her, but they would not do, she never got the better of it; she every day grew worse, and would sometimes call upon Mr. Henry, and complain of the cruelty of his father, and then she would fall down upon her knees and ask forgiveness of poor Mr. Arnold, who was almost distracted at the sight; but it is all over, your honour, she is now at rest, and may Heaven reward her as she deserves!"

What my sensations were during this recital, it is impossible to describe; I can only say, that I felt myself so overpowered by the sudden and shocking piece of information, that, void of strength, I sank into a chair, faint, and unable to express the agony of my mind. The rapturous ideas of happiness with which I had fondly heated my imagination, were now no more: in their place, a scene of all others the most distressing to my heart presented itself, the image of my worthy Arnold stretched weeping on the body of his Maria, of that Maria, whose innocence and simplicity were so dear to me. Even now my soul shudders at the recollection of this dreadful moment. Accursed be the wretch that brought thee low, thou gentlest of the forms of virtue! May anguish torture his corrupted heart! Little wert thou able to contend

with misery such as this, with the pang of disappointed love, and the brutal violence of unfeeling passion, for thou wert mild as

> ——————— Patience, "who,"
> Her meek hands folded on her modest breast,
> In mute submission lifts the adoring eye
> Even to the storm that wrecks her. MASON.

When the poignancy of grief was abated, I mingled my tears with the honest farmer's, whose sensibility of heart, the genuine effusion of pity and affection, had strongly impressed me in his favour. I spent the night under his roof, and in the morning bidding him a melancholy farewell, I rode on to Ruysd—le, with an intention of seeing my afflicted friend, and of being present at the awful ceremony; for, in the state of mind I was then in, it was a pensive luxury I would not have foregone on any consideration.

When I came within sight of the parsonage, my sensations nearly overcame me; here, I once fondly hoped to have found the same domestic felicity and contentment I had formerly experienced; but, mark the mutability of human bliss! this spot, so lately the abode of happiness and of innocence, now appeared the seat of silence and of solitude, of sorrow and of death. Scarce had I resolution to approach the house, for although I well knew the resignation and the piety of Arnold, yet I dreaded to recall those scenes, the recollection of which would only give edge to his sufferings, and fresh misery to his painful task. The

villagers were assembled on the green, dressed in their neatest clothes, and those who could afford it, in black. There was not a whisper heard among them, the tear rolled down their honest cheeks, and on their features dwelt the sentiments of pity and regret. A lane was formed for me as I passed along; we interchanged not a word; I cast my eyes upon the ground; they wept aloud. I was so much affected I could scarce sit upon my horse, and leaving it at a small cottage when I got through them, I went to the parsonage on foot. I entered, and meeting a servant in the hall, he pointed to the parlour and retired. I advanced towards it; the door was half open; and sliding softly in, a spectacle presented itself whose impression will never be erased from my memory. In the middle of the room was placed the coffin of Maria, the lid was taken off, and beside it, in his robes, knelt the unfortunate Frederick Arnold; Maria's lifeless hand was locked in his, and on her clay-cold corse were fixed his streaming eyes. A considerable shade was thrown over the room, the windows looking upon the green being closed up, but through the garden-window the sun broke in, and shone full upon the features of Arnold; his countenance was pale, languid, but remarkably interesting, and received a peculiar degree of expression from the tint of the morning light, and his hair, which had early become white, was scattered in thin portions over his temples and forehead. I stood impressed with awe; my soul was filled with compassion, and

I wished to indulge my sorrow; but as Arnold did not perceive me, I thought it best not to interrupt him, and was therefore going to retire, when suddenly rising up, he exclaimed, "Farewell, my Maria! thou that wert the solace of mine age, farewell! oh, if thy unembodied spirit still hovers o'er this scene of things, be present to thy afflicted father, pour comfort into his wounded bosom! sure, to do this will be thy paradise, Maria, and sure thou hast met with thy reward! What, if unavailing regret still tortures this distracted heart, still brings thy injured form to view, yet, through the mercies of my God, will I look forward with hope; I will meet thee, O my daughter! in heaven. God of mercies! hear me." — "He will, he will, thou good old man!" I cried: "he will listen to thy prayer." Arnold started; "Is it thou, my son?" he said, and, falling upon my neck, he wept; then presently recovering himself, he advanced with composure towards the coffin: "Come hither," he cried, "and view the remains of fallen innocence and beauty! see, my son, what one step from rectitude of conduct has produced; see the unfortunate Maria!" I advanced, and, kneeling down, kissed the pale hand of Maria; a sweet serenity dwelt upon her features, and she seemed to be asleep; I would have spoken, but I could not; I sighed in a convulsive manner; for the tumult of my spirits quite oppressed me; and Arnold observing this, seized my arm, and ordering the coffin to be screwed down, conveyed me into another room. Here,

in a little time, I recovered some calmness of mind, and Arnold, taking me by the hand, desired me to collect all my fortitude. "I go to bury my Maria;" he said, "but let not the murmurings of discontent break in upon the sacred rite: to Providence, not to us, the chastenings of mortality are given." Having said this, he quitted the room, and, giving orders for the procession, proceeded to the church. In a few minutes the coffin was carried out upon the green; it was covered with black velvet, over which was thrown a pall of white satin, and here half-a-dozen young women, dressed in white, supported it, whilst as many in the same habit walked two and two before, and the like number behind it. They sang a dirge adapted to the occasion, and with slow and solemn steps went forward to the church. The whole village followed; and never was sorrow better painted than in the features of this mournful group. I loitered at a little distance, absorbed in the melancholy of my own reflections.

——————————the bell
Of death beat slow!——————
It paused now, and now with rising knell
Flung to the hollow gale its sullen sound.
MASON.

The wind sighed through the yew-trees, and the face of nature seemed to darken with oppressive gloom. We entered the church, where, after all things had been duly arranged, the ceremony was begun. A calm resignation

was apparent in the countenance of Arnold; and as he pronounced the sublime and pathetic language of the service, a kind of divine enthusiasm lightened from his eyes. Now and then his speech would falter, and the tear would trickle down his cheek, and I witnessed many an effort to suppress the tender emotions of his soul; but a high sense of the duty of his office kept within restriction the feelings of the father. He had now proceeded a considerable way in the service, and the corse was made ready to be laid in the earth, when suddenly the folding doors of the church were thrown open, and a young man, in mourning, rushed vehemently in: his aspect was hurried and wild; and he exclaimed in a loud but convulsive tone of voice, "Where is my Maria! think not to wrest her from me! I will see her once more: I come to die with thee, my love! Stand off, ye inhuman wretches! Off, and give me way!" He then broke through the crowd, which had opposed him; and seeing the coffin, he started some paces backward. "Help me, she is murdered!" he exclaimed: "My gentle love is murdered!" and throwing himself on the coffin, he became speechless with agony. It was with the utmost difficulty we tore him from it: he struggled hard, and his eyes darted fire, but at length, having liberated himself, he paused a moment; then, striking his forehead with his hand, he muttered, "I will — 'tis fit it should be so!" and darting furiously through the aisle, disappeared. But scarce had we time to breathe, before he again entered,

dragging in a man advanced in years: "Come on, thou wretched author of my being!" he exclaimed; "come, see the devastation thou hast made!" and compelling him to approach the coffin; "look," he said; "see where she bleeds beneath thy ruthless arm! O my deserted love! seest thou not how she supplicates thy mercy! Perdition —— but I will not curse thee, O my father! I will not curse thee;" and saying this he threw himself on the coffin. The old man in the mean time became the very picture of horror; his hair stood erect, his face was pale as death, and his teeth struck each other; he looked first upon the coffin, and then upon his son, and, racked with pity and remorse, he at last burst into tears: "Have compassion on me, my son!" he cried: "kill not thy father!" — "It is enough," said the youth, slowly lifting up his head: "it is enough, my father;" and being now more calm, we prevailed upon him to arise; and Arnold, after some time, concluded the ceremony.

Our consternation during this dreadful scene may be readily conceived, and how much it would shock the feelings of the worthy curate; who, after the first tumult of surprise had ceased, conducted himself with all that dignity and mildness of manner so peculiarly engaging in his character. Old Stafford, and his son, who was with difficulty persuaded to quit the church, were now led to the parsonage. Their appearance had been occasioned by a letter written by Miss Stafford to her brother, mentioning the situation of Maria, her miscarriage,

indisposition, and the treatment she had met with; and, irritated to the highest degree, he immediately left the Continent, and arrived at his father's house early on the same day Maria was buried. Her death was unknown at H—t—n Hall; and Henry insisted upon his father's accompanying him immediately to the curate's, as his presence would be necessary for the satisfaction of both parties. Mr. Stafford was much averse to the measure; but as his son's health had been lately upon the decline, and his present agitated state of mind contributed greatly to increase his complaint, he reluctantly complied with his request, still hoping to avoid so unprofitable a connection. Upon their arrival at Ruysd—le, they drove to the parsonage, and being there informed of the death of Maria, and that the burial-service was then actually performing, the carriage was ordered to the church, and Henry rushed in, in the manner above mentioned.

The Staffords, having continued a couple of days at the parsonage, returned to H—t—n Hall. Young Stafford's health is much impaired; and it is apprehended he will fall a sacrifice to the unfeeling tyranny of a father, whose remorse is now as excessive as it is fruitless.

I purpose remaining a few months with my worthy friend, until time hath in some degree mitigated the pressure of his misfortune. I find also a melancholy pleasure in visiting the many scenes in this neighbourhood, whose romantic and sequestered beauty gave employ-

ment to the pencil and the taste of Maria, and I, am now finishing this hasty sketch on the banks of the rapid Sw—le, and under the shelter of an oak, whose antique branches throw a broad and deep shade athwart his surface; turbulent he pours along beneath yon scowling precipice, he rises from his bed, and wild his gloomy spirit shrieks. Here can I indulge the fervour of my imagination; here can I call up the fleeting forms of fancy; I can here hold converse with Maria; and, yielding to the pensive bias of my mind, enjoy the torrent and the howling storm.

HORACE,

Book II. Satire VI.

IMITATED.*

Hoc erat in votis, &c. &c.

'Twas oft my earnest wish some Knight or Peer
Would give me just three hundred pounds a year,
Some easy rectory, or some snug retreat,
With pleasant parsonage, not too small or great:
That, and still more, the bounteous fates have sent,
And given that first best blessing of content.
Bribe'd by no pension, tempted by no place,
I spurn at riches purchas'd with disgrace;

* For this very spirited and pleasing Imitation of Horace, I am indebted to my friend the Rev. Francis Drake, D.D., late Fellow of Maudlin College, Oxford.

Nor yet to passion, or to pride a slave,
Have wasted all the little wealth they gave,
Nor idly wish my lucky stars to grant
Some hidden treasure more than what I want.
When from the Town I seek the sylvan shade,
The Muse shall lend me all her magic aid;
'Midst the cool grove, nor love of pomp, or power,
Nor party rage disturb my happier hour;
The Muse alone my constant guide and friend,
Of all my joys, beginning and the end.
Forc'd by some friend's importunate request,
To give up all my love of peace and rest,
Obliged to jostle thro' the crowded street,
And elbow every mortal that I meet,
Push thro' the courts, and hasten without fail,
For some poor client to give bond or bail;
The motley mob with sneers mistake my case,
And think me pushing for some stall, or place;
Thus while I bustle thro' the busy town,
An hundred cares disturb me — not my own:
One begs at early hour I would support
His cause to-morrow at the public court;
Another urging will take no denial,
And cites me as a Witness at his trial:
While others rudely pull me by the coat,
And loudly ask my interest and my vote.

'Tis now some years, since first a noble Peer
Wou'd take my hand, and whisper in my ear;
Ask me to dine, commend some pleasant spot,
And talk of trifles which are soon forgot:
As who acts best in Reynolds' last new play,
Or what the news, and rumour of the day:
Say, can the Spaniards join the Gallic fleet,
Or will at length the proud Direct'ry treat? —
When I protest I know no more than they,
They think me wond'rous sly, and walk away. —

Thus do my hours insipid steal along,
While this is still the burden of my song: —
Hail, far-fam'd Maudlin! When will heaven please
'Midst thy cool groves to indulge my love of ease?
In active indolence amuse my time,
And pass the peaceful hours with books and rhyme?
Soothe the dull cares, and tumults of my breast,
And gently lull the sober soul to rest? —
Or, when at home, my neighbouring friends regale,
A social circle, with my nut-brown ale,
Or good old port, while every welcome guest
Without control just drinks as he likes best:
No trifling subjects our discourse engage
Of Opera Dancers, or the Comic Stage,
What this fine palace, that proud villa cost,
But what concerns each serious mortal most.
Does real bliss from wealth, or virtue flow?
What makes, and keeps men happy here below?
What best our mutual friendship will maintain,
What yields most pleasure, and what gives least
pain?

Should some old friend with honest rage relate,
How starving Elways gain'd his vast estate,
The gentle Shenstone wou'd begin a tale,
As thus —— In some remote and lonely vale
There liv'd a sober mouse, whose homely board
Could every day one frugal meal afford;
A pamper'd mouse resolv'd one day to spend
A few spare hours and visit this old friend;
With hearty welcome he receives his guest,
And opes his cupboard to provide the best,
Serves him at table with officious care,
And heaps his plate with lumps of country fare;
The civil mouse with delicate disgust
Nibbles some cheese, or gnaws some mouldy crust,
When thus he cries, 'Too long you have endur'd
Within this dismal cave to live immur'd;

Leave these dull scenes, unknowing and unknown,
And taste with me the pleasures of the Town:
Short is our life, the coward and the brave
Alike descend beneath the silent grave.—
Thus said, with eager haste they post away,
And reach the city at the close of day.
There in a palace with rich carpets spread,
They lie luxurious on a silken bed;
There joyous revel 'midst the luscious store
Of costly dainties left the day before.—
The well-bred mouse his rustic guest attends,
Tastes every dish, their qualities commends;
While the poor cull, with secret joy elate,
Smiles, and indulges in his change of state.
When lo! the doors unlock with jarring sound,
A motley rabble fills the room around,
Half dead with fear the trembling culprits stole
To seek for safety thro' some lucky hole,
While thus the rustic, as in haste he flies,
With scorning sneer, Adieu, kind Sir, he cries,
Your taste is much more elegant than mine,
I like not so much company to dine,
Content with coarser bill of fare to dwell,
Secure from danger in my humble cell.

No. XXVIII.

Ill-fated Poesy! as human worth,
Prais'd, yet unaided, often sinks to earth;
So sink thy powers; not doom'd alone to know
Scorn, or neglect, from an unfeeling Foe,
But destin'd more oppressive wrong to feel,
From the misguided Friend's perplexing zeal.
Such Friends are those, who in their proud display
Of thy young beauty, and thy early sway,
Pretend thou'rt robb'd of all thy worth sublime,
By the benumbing touch of modern Time.

HAYLEY.

MANY critics, more querulous than just, have lately employed themselves in depreciating the efforts of the modern muses, and several of our literary and periodical publications have teemed with reflections on the sterility and want of genius apparent in the present cultivators of this enchanting art. They insist with rapture on the beauties of our ancient poets, and are willing to believe that the invention and imagery of their contemporaries are puerile and absurd. Should a single poem make its appearance, whose style is tumid and glittering with meretricious ornament, not satisfied with reprobating the individual attempt, they launch forth into extravagant encomia on the simplicity of a former age, and pass indiscriminate and unqualified

censure on what they term the prevailing taste. Even some men of acknowledged genius, from an undue bias to antiquity, have inadvertently given in to this sweeping mode of criticism, than which nothing can be more futile and absurd. These *laudatores temporis acti*, who dwell so much upon the general and superior merit of our poetry in the ages of Elizabeth and the Charles's, would do well to reflect that in those periods the language was extremely incorrect; that beauty of arrangement, propriety of selection, and delicacy of sentiment were, for the most part, unknown, and it may, without any hazard of contradiction, be asserted, that from these boasted eras no one production can be drawn possessing an uniform chastity of style and thought. Even our three great poets, Spenser, Shakspeare, and Milton, are clogged with materials that press heavy on the patience of the critical reader, and certainly abound in quaintnesses, puerilities, and conceits, which would blast the reputation of any poet of the present day. Not to mention many cantos of Spenser, which, I am afraid, must be pronounced both tedious and disgusting, the Paradise Lost would be greatly diminished were its metaphysic and abstruse theology, surely no proper ornaments of an epic poem, entirely expunged. The third book, its exquisite invocation, and a few other passages excepted, is more worthy the genius of Thomas Aquinas than of Milton: and of Shakspeare it may justly be affirmed, that some of his plays are barely tolerated out of deference to the excellencies of his happier

productions. The beauties of these writers are, however, above all praise, and I am accustomed to approach their works with an admiration almost bordering upon idolatry. But let not their faults, the faults, in a great measure, of the age in which they existed, be thrown into the shade for the purpose of enhancing the lustre of their genius when placed in competition with that of their disciples. They want no such injudicious aid, nor does the negative praise of avoiding their blemishes constitute the sole merit of our present race of poets: it will be found perhaps, ere the subject be concluded, that an emulation of their inventive powers, as well as a solicitude to escape their errors, is the proper foundation of their fame. As to the various poets who were co-existent with our three immortal bards, though they occasionally exhibit very brilliant passages, yet are they mingled with such a mass of obscurity, vulgarity, obscenity, and colloquial barbarism, that he must be a very hardy critic indeed, who can venture to station them on a level with the modern votaries of the muse.

Simplicity of language, in a rude age, or in one approximating towards civilization, is merely casual, for, as Dr. Aikin has justly observed, "a simple age is never sensible of the merit of its own simplicity, but, on the contrary, is fond of laying on with profusion all the ornament it possesses."* That exquisite selection of style and thought, which stamps such attraction on many of the first-rate productions of our own

* Letters from a Father to his Son, p. 21.

period, is the result of systematic refinement, and of the progress of language toward perfection. It would be no difficult task to prove, that in the art of composition, with regard to purity of diction and felicitous structure of sentence, the present reign is greatly superior to any former era; and as to poetry, I believe we can produce no truly correct poet before the lyric Gray, for even Pope has illegitimate rhymes, and gross grammatical inaccuracies. Nor will it be an arduous attempt to convince the unprejudiced, that in vigour of conception, in warmth and boldness of imagery, our chief poets for the last forty or fifty years have little reason to shrink from competition with their predecessors.

In the very ingenious introduction, by Mr. Headley, to the *Select Beauties of Ancient English Poetry*, and which contains many very elegant and acute remarks, I have ever been astonished at the following unqualified assertion. "That Key," says the author, "which is most beautifully feigned by the poet * to have been given by Nature to Shakspeare, and which was likewise in the hands of some few of his contemporaries, 'that oped the sacred source of sympathetic tears,' *seems now, and has done for a century past, irrecoverably lost.*"† The chief scope indeed of the Essay from whence this is taken, is to inculcate a decided preference for the poetry of the age of Elizabeth and Charles; yet it is scarcely to be imagined that any person, especially one so well versed in our literature as

* Gray, Ode v. The Progress of Poesy.
† Vide Introduction, p. 28.

Mr. Headley indisputably was, could have failed to recollect that some of our most pathetic poets have flourished since these reigns. Not Shakspeare himself can vie with Otway in eliciting the tear of pity: and had Mr. Headley forgotten the *Isabella* of Southern, and the *Fatal Curiosity* of Lillo; had he forgotten the *Eloisa* of Pope, the pathetic pieces of Collins, and the *Night Thoughts* of the melancholy Young; and above all, had he forgotten the poems ascribed to Rowley and to Ossian, the latter the most pathetic of all bards, for I must consider both these collections as, in a great degree, modern? may even whilst quoting Mr. Gray, he seems totally to have thrown into oblivion his inimitable elegy.

In another part of the same Introduction, he gives us a list of poets from the accession of Elizabeth inclusively to the restoration of Charles the Second, a period of ninety-one years, and considers these as forming a constellation in poetic lustre far superior to any that can be exhibited from that time to this, a space amounting to nearly a century and a half.

Now, without any recurrence to poets of a date anterior to 1755, I hope to be able to shew that so far from our poetical genius having degenerated, a cluster of names may be formed during the lapse of less than half a century, which perhaps, with the exception of a single individual, the unrivalled Shakspeare, will rise superior, not only to the phalanx Mr. Headley has arranged, but to the entire previous body of our poetry, should it be

mustered in opposition to the product of the period we have assigned. Before entering however into any disquisition relative to our modern luminaries, it will be necessary to place before the reader the table of Mr. Headley, and a few strictures on its contents.

ELIZABETH began to reign in 1558.

Epic Poets.	*Philosophical and Metaphysical.*	*Dramatic.*	*Historical.*
Spenser.	Sir J. Davies.	G. Gascoyne.	Niccols.
Milton.	Phin. Fletcher.	Shakspeare.	Sackville.
Davenant.	Giles Fletcher.	Massinger.	Daniel.
	H. More.	Jonson.	Drayton.
		Beaumont and Fletcher.	May.
		Shirley.	I. Beaumont.
Satirical.	*Pastoral.*	*Amatory and Miscellaneous.*	*Translators.*
Hall.	Warner.	Raleigh.	Fairfax.
Marston.	Drayton.	Drummond.	Sandys.
Rowands.	Browne.	Marlowe.	Crashawe.
Donne.	Fairfax.	Cowley.	
		Carew.	
		Corbet.	
		King.	
		Habington.	
		Cartwright.	
		Randolph.	
		Suckling.	

Such is the list which the elegant Collector of the *Ancient Beauties of English Poetry* esteems unrivalled. That a very splendid and

valuable poetic mass is here accumulated within less than a century cannot be denied, but if we withdraw the names of Shakspeare and Milton, the rest will be totally unable, I conceive, to support the contest even with the poets of the last forty or fifty years. Let us now however briefly notice the principal members in the order of their arrangement; and in the first place, with regard to Spenser it may be asserted, that though possessing a splendid imagination and much accurate descriptive painting, abounding in strong personification, and displaying great tenderness of heart, yet is his *Fairy Queen*, from its allegorical form, its want of unity and compression, nearly devoid of interest, and to many of his readers, I apprehend, proves not unfrequently very tedious. He who has once read Spenser through, will not probably be induced to repeat the entire perusal, but, marking the more brilliant passages, will again and again, and with undiminished pleasure, have recourse to his selection. There is occasionally also a naïveté in his diction and manner that is peculiarly fascinating, and though some of his cantos might be lost without a sigh, yet will his work be ever valued as a store-house of bold and circumstantial imagery.

If Milton in sublimity has never been exceeded, though it will be found hereafter that some authors of the present day have made a near approach to his excellencies in this department, yet in the pathetic and the beautiful he will frequently be obliged to yield the palm.

His chief deficiencies are in the third and twelfth books, and his fable involves no close or national interest. Nothing can well be more erroneous than the opinion of Addison, when, speaking of the interest of the Iliad and Æneid as arising from national subjects, he observes, "Milton's poem is admirable in this respect, since it is impossible for any of its readers, whatever nation, country, or people he may belong to, not to be related to the persons who are the principal actors in *it." "One should hardly have supposed," remarks our Poet Laureat, "that Addison could have been ignorant of the obvious truth, that every affection is exactly weakened in proportion to its becoming general. There is no distinction so great in civil life as that between a man and any other animal, and yet I never knew a person proud of this last distinction, though there is no elevation of rank so inconsiderable as not to have awakened pride in some bosoms. The same thing happens to the other passions. We are strongly affected by a tale of private distress, even if not extending to danger or death; but we read, without any emotion, of,

In one great day, on Hockstet's fatal plain,
French and Bavarians, twenty thousand slain,
Push'd through the Danube to the shores of Styx;
Squadrons eighteen, battalions twenty-six.

PRIOR."†

* Spectator, No. 273.
† Pye's Commentary on the Poetics of Aristotle, p. 163.

Of the fragment of Davenant it will be sufficient to observe, that his mode of versification, and his total rejection of machinery, were of themselves adequate to produce neglect. It has however its beauties, though not of the first order, and these have met with elucidation in the elegant critique of Dr. Aikin.

Under the next class we find the names of Sir J. Davies and the two Fletchers, authors of the *Nosce Teipsum*, *The Purple Island*, and *Christ's Victory*, poems from which may be detached a few morsels of exquisite simplicity and descriptive beauty, but when taken in the mass, criticism, if impartial, must pronounce them insufferably tedious and quaint. The anatomy of the human body is a subject little calculated for poetry, and would weigh down the first abilities; nor is the theology of Giles Fletcher in the least better adapted to the decorations of the Muse. The production of Davies has more terseness and perspicuity, but in poetical genius he is inferior to the two brothers.

In the dramatic department occurs the mighty name of Shakspeare; but as with him all competition is hopeless, I shall only remark, that his *Macbeth*, *Lear*, and *Tempest*, will perhaps, to the remotest period of time, continue unrivalled. It is possible, however, to conceive that the genius of Shakspeare may be combined with the chastity and correctness of Sophocles, but the birth of such a prodigy is scarcely to be expected.

There was a period when the productions

of Jonson, Beaumont, and Fletcher, were preferred to those of Shakspeare. We are now astonished at the miserable taste of our ancestors: for of Jonson, the celebrated but pedantic Jonson, if we except three or four of his comedies, and a few of his masques, there is little commendatory to be said. His tragedies are tame and servile copies from the ancients, and though in his comedies of the *Fox*, the *Silent Woman*, and the *Alchemist*, the characters are strongly cast, and have both wit and humour, they are of a kind by no means generally relished or understood, nor would they now, nor probably will they hereafter, enjoy much popularity on the stage.

Massinger, Beaumont, and Fletcher have certainly many beauties, but I question whether they possess a single piece which a correct taste could endure without very great alteration, and they are loaded with such a mass of obscenity and vulgar buffoonery, that compared with them Shakspeare is chaste and decorous in the extreme. It may justly be said, I think, that their tragedies fall far, very far short indeed, of the energy and all-commanding interest of Shakspeare's, and their comedies, I suspect, are even greatly inferior to Jonson's both in plot and humour. They are certainly however superior in genius to Jonson: they have more simplicity and pathos, and their blank verse has very frequently a peculiar felicity of construction. The madness of the Jailor's Daughter in the *Two Noble Kinsmen* of Beaumont and Fletcher, approximates very closely to the man-

ner and style of Shakspeare, and their *Philaster* can boast of many tender and beautifully expressed scenes. The *Bloody Brother* too of these authors is conducted with much art and dramatic effect. Fletcher, indeed, seems to have possessed an exquisite sensibility, and had he not sacrificed so much to the degrading propensities of his age, might, as the British Euripides, have attained a most honourable station in the Temple of Pity.

Historical poetry is little susceptible of the highest beauties of the art, being too rigidly confined to allow room for the imagination to expand: it has therefore, save when it has assumed the dramatic form, seldom been popular. The *Mirror for Magistrates* is now almost, and perhaps deservedly, forgotten; for if we except the Induction of Sackville, which is undoubtedly an exquisite piece of allegory, and a few passages by Niccols, it is a compilation more remarkable for dulness than for any other quality. Daniel can lay claim to good sense, to perspicuity of style, and smoothness of diction, but these alone will not constitute a poet; and the author of the *Civil Warres* must be content with the character of mediocrity. Of Drayton the best parts are pastoral, and these are indeed truly excellent; his *Legends*, however, his *Heroical Epistles* and his *Barons Warres*, contain many pathetic passages; but his most elaborate work the *Poly-Olbion* exhibits much more of the Antiquary than of the Poet. Drayton is frequently a pleasing but never a great poet. Of May and Beaumont it is not necessary to say

much: the former is occasionally nervous and energic, and their national subjects might enhance their reputation; their poems, however, are but too often little superior to gazettes in rhyme.

In the column allotted to Satire are four names, and of these Hall, in my opinion, is alone entitled to celebrity. His satires are, in truth, for the period in which he wrote, wonderful productions, and evince great knowledge of character, and great spirit and harmony in versification. * As to Donne, if it be true that the purport of poetry should be to please, no author has written with such utter neglect of the rule. It is scarce possible for a human ear to endure the dissonance and discord of his couplets, and even when his thoughts are clothed in the melody of Pope, they appear to me hardly worth the decoration.

I have already, in a paper on pastoral poetry, given my opinion at some length on that delightful species of composition, and have mentioned Warner as entitled to no small share of fame. His simplicity of style and thought is often exquisitely appropriate, but his *Albion's England* is a bulky work; and were his pastoral beauties detached, which unfortunately form but a small portion of the whole, the rest must be given up as a compound of dulness and prolixity. The entire poem, however, as I have before observed, should be republished, as a single couplet in

* See an excellent piece of criticism on this author in Heron's Letters of Literature.

this author is sometimes peculiarly pleasing. Drayton, too, will be preserved from oblivion solely by his pastoral genius; though not equal perhaps to Warner, he has numerous sweet passages which highly merit preservation. Had Browne paid due attention to simplicity and selection, he had been a favourite poet as long as the language he had written in should endure. He has accumulated a vast store of rural imagery, but his style and manner are so fantastic, so often quaint and puerile, that he is unfortunately hastening to oblivion.

In noticing the catalogue of poets ranged under the title of *Amatory and Miscellaneous*, it is impossible not to be struck with the mutability of popular applause. Cowley and Cartwright were the favourites of their times, were considered as the first of poets, celebrated by their literary contemporaries in loud and repeated panegyrics, and their names familiar in every class of society. What is now their fate? To be utterly neglected, and, except to those who justly think it necessary to be intimate with every stage of our literature, nearly unknown. Have they deserved this? Let the patient reader wade through their numerous works, and he will probably answer, Yes. The selection from Cowley by Dr. Hurd has, in some measure, respited the unhappy poet, but even in these small volumes the judicious critic will prefer the prose to the poetry. Indeed in the whole of this list it appears to me that there is but one author, and that Drummond, whose poetry merits much praise. His sonnets are

delicious, and deserve the encomium that has been bestowed upon them. To say of Carew that he is superior to Waller, is saying nothing; for if every line of Waller were lost, I know not that poetry would have much to lament. The works of both however should be preserved, and I hope ever will be, as necessary to mark the progress of our language toward refinement. It may be added that Corbet had wit, and that Raleigh, had he made poetry a serious study, might have attained to excellence. To expatiate on the merits of the remaining poets of this column, would be as frivolous as to commence a discussion on the beauties of Spratt or Stepney, Duke or Yalden; we will therefore proceed to the translators of this period, and of these Fairfax is entitled to great applause. I question whether any late attempt to naturalize the beautiful epic of Tasso can be considered as superior, either in energy or fidelity, to this old but admirable version. In many places the diction of Fairfax is peculiarly pleasing; and he greatly excels in transfusing the rural imagery of his author, and which sometimes receives even improvement from his colouring. Had Mr. Brooke, however, lived to finish his translation of the Gerusalemme Liberata, of which unfortunately we have but three books, he would certainly have surpassed both Fairfax and Hoole. What he has given us is executed with so much taste and spirit, that it unavoidably excites acute regret that the worthy author was not permitted to complete an undertaking so happily commenced. From

the specimen however with which Miss Watts has lately favoured the public, we have reason to expect a version that will probably leave little to wish for. * Crashawe possessed the requisites of a genuine poet, enthusiasm and sublimity; but he never undertook any grand or original work. His choice of Marino, a poet abounding in concetti, was injudicious; and though his translation has several passages which challenge admiration, yet as a whole it is far from being pleasing. Many of his images are disgusting and absurdly gigantic, and tend rather to call up ludicrous than terrible ideas. Of Sandys it will suffice to observe, that though his Ovid cannot now be read with any satisfaction, it had, at the time of its publication, considerable merit: few poets, unless their powers be very great, who either write or translate before their language has received a due polish, and a regular construction, can hope to merit the attention of posterity.

* For a more extended consideration of the merits of Tasso's Translators, I beg leave to refer to the second volume of my "Winter Nights," recently published.

No. XXIX.

Free the young Bard from that oppressive awe,
Which feels Opinion's rule as Reason's law,
And from his spirit bid vain fears depart,
Of weaken'd Nature and exhausted Art!
Phantoms! that literary spleen conceives!
Dulness adopts, and Indolence believes!

HAYLEY.

HAVING in the preceding number commented on the arrangement of Mr. Headley, I shall now give a somewhat similar table of the poets who have honoured their country for the last forty or fifty years, offer some observations on the individuals who compose it, and contrast them, as I proceed, with those who have filled the more extended period from the accession of Elizabeth to the restoration of Charles.

In constructing this table, it must be obvious that names only of prominent and acknowledged excellence could be inserted. It is probable, however, that some poets, who possess a legitimate claim to admission, may have been overlooked. To introduce these, when pointed out, will not only add strength to the object of this paper, but will impart a real pleasure to its author. *

* It may be necessary to remind the reader that the following enumeration of modern poets extends but to the year 1804. That it might be now enriched by many additional names of high celebrity in the *Lyric*, *Descriptive*, and *Miscellaneous* departments, will be admitted by all who are conversant with the poetry of the present day.

Epic.	*Dramatic.*	*Lyric.*	*Descriptive.*
Ossian.	Hoadley.	Gray.	Cowper
Hole.	Moore.	Mason.	Hurdis.
Cumberland.	Mason.	Warton, J.	Gisborne.
Southey.	Walpole.	Warton, T.	Bidlake.
	Home.	Sayers.	Sotheby.
	Murphy.	Hole.	Burges.
	Colman.	Richards.	Bloomfield.
	Cumberland.	Coleridge.	
	Jephson.	Sargent.	
	Sheridan.	Whitehouse.	
	Chatterton.		
Didactic.	*Satiric.*	*Miscellaneous.*	*Translators.*
Mason.	Churchill.	Goldsmith.	Warton, J.
Hayley.	Anstey.	Beattie.	Colman.
Downman.	Wolcot.	Hayley.	Mickle.
Polwhele.	Gifford.	Barbauld.	Potter.
Darwin.	The Author of The Pursuits of Literature.	Burns.	Hoole.
		Langhorne.	Jones, Sir W.
		Cawthorne.	Boyd.
		Penrose.	Polwhele.
		Scott.	Cowper.
		Pratt.	Beresford.
		Williams, Helen	Brooke.
		Smith, Charlotte	Boscawen.
		Bowles.	Carlyle.
		Seward.	Sotheby.
		Pye.	
		Rogers.	
		Radcliffe.	
		Maurice.	
		Polwhele.	
		Campbell.	

The epic is confessedly the most elevated and difficult province of the poetic art, and requires both consummate genius, and an intimate knowledge of the science, literature,

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manners, and customs, not only of the age in which the poet writes, but of the period also from whence he draws his fable. Homer, Virgil, Tasso, and Milton, seem to have possessed all the knowledge requisite for their elaborate and immortal productions; and though Ossian, supposing these poems to have the antiquity they claim, lived in an era comparatively barbarous, he was certainly the best informed and most ingenious chieftain of his age, and enjoyed the great advantage of describing scenes in which he himself was actually an important agent. The descriptions throughout the works of this bard are so undeviatingly correct and simple, so appropriate to the period in which he is supposed to have existed, that with many this alone is considered as an irrefragable proof of their antiquity; and indeed, should it ever be fully ascertained that these poems are the entire produce of the present century, Mr. Macpherson must not only be esteemed as one of the first poets, but as exhibiting an attention and skill in the preservation of costume hitherto unparalleled. Ancient or modern, however, these poems must be viewed as pregnant with beauties of the highest rank; uniformly mild and generous in manners and sentiment, uniformly simple, pathetic, and sublime, vivid and picturesque in imagery, in diction rapid, nervous, and concise, they are alike calculated to melt and meliorate the heart, to elevate and fire the imagination. I do not hesitate to affirm that, if in sublimity the palm must be allowed, and I think it must, to our great

countryman, yet in the pathetic the Caledonian is far superior, not only to Milton, but to every other poet. Conceiving, therefore, as I firmly do, that *Fingal* and *Temora* are solely indebted to Mr. Macpherson for their form, and for, probably, a very considerable portion of their matter, and as the bard under whose name they are now published was totally unknown till within these forty years, I have placed them, and wish indeed there to place the whole collection, which is in fact truly epic, at the head of the first department, where I am confident they need not fear comparison with any specimens of our elder poetry.

The Gothic mythology, which as an instrument in the hands of Tasso and Shakspeare produced such wonderful effects, has until very lately little attracted notice. Gray indeed gave us a few spirited versions from the Edda; but since his death a taste for the wild and the terrible has been more cultivated, and * Wieland

* In a note to p. 49. volume the first, of this work, I have expressed regret that the *Oberon* of this poet had not assumed an English dress. Since that note was written, a translation from the pen of William Sotheby, Esq. has made its appearance. My acquaintance with this admirable poem, being hitherto through the medium of a very indifferent French version, it was with much pleasure and expectation I took up the volumes of Mr. Sotheby; nor have I been disappointed. The versification is usually free and harmonious, and the diction in many places glows with a curious felicity of expression. The various descriptions of female beauty, and the numerous sketchings in landscape with which the Oberon abounds, are given *con amore*. The elegant and happy machinery, too, of this poem, unfolding to so much advantage the luxuriant and sportive imagination of Wieland, has been transfused with energy and ease. As specimens of the success with which this

and Bürger in Germany, and in our island, Hole in his Epic of *Arthur*, Sayers in his *Dramatic Sketches of Northern Mythology*, and

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attempt has been conducted, I shall transcribe a couple of passages; the first, descriptive of the wild illusions of the mind during disturbed sleep, the second, of pious abstraction from all worldly solicitude and thought. The delusive imagery arising from the night-mare is thus singularly drawn.

There, for example, I remember well,
When forth I went to saunter, free from care,
Heaven knows from whence, a black and bristly bear
Rush'd out before my path-way, grim as hell!
I, mute with horror, grasp my trusty blade,
Pull, pull in vain! — my limbs no longer aid —
Down drop my slacken'd joints — the monster there
Grows as I gaze — jaws widen — eye-balls glare! —
I cannot fight, nor fly, by viewless force delay'd!

Another time, when, from your evening meal
You dream that home returning, by the way
Where an old mansion totters in decay,
As fearfully along the gloom you steal,
At once a little window-shutter rings,
And looking, out a nose of giant springs
Long as your arm! where'er you strive to fly,
Before, behind, strange phantoms fix your eye,
Loll out a length of tongue, and dart their fiery stings.

Then, while in deadly fright you breathless glide,
And sideways press against the wall, behold
A wrinkled hand with skinny finger cold,
From a round hole at once is felt to slide
Chill down your back, and fumbles you about
From rib to rib, to pinch you well, no doubt:
Up starts each bristling hair; to bar your flight
The street still narrower grows before your sight,
Colder the hand of ice, longer the giant snout!

Canto iv.

a few authors of Romance, among whom Mrs. Radcliffe * holds a distinguished place, have spread a wider canvass, and touched it with

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The following picture of holy resignation cannot be too much admired:

Now, bowed with years, his lov'd companion died —
Alone remain'd the hermit, yet the more
His spirit turn'd to that celestial shore,
Where all he lov'd did with their God reside —
There dwelt his soul — a wandering stranger here —
'Mid the still night when objects disappear,
And bodies, as external senses die,
In their first nothing seem again to lie,
Oft on his cheek he felt a breathing spirit near.

Then his half-slumbering ears in trance perceive,
With shuddering rapture heard, the groves among,
Angelic harmonies, at distance sung,
For him the inexpressive chorus weave:
And as he lists he feels earth's slender wall,
That parts him from his friends, about to fall;
His spirit swells, a flame celestial bright
Burns in his breast, while rob'd in heavenly light
Shapes of the viewless world his soul responsive call.

These yet remain, when softly laid in sleep
His eyelids close, and in the morning's rays,
When the wide world its theatre displays,
Still o'er his sense the warbled echoes sweep;
A soul-felt glance of heavenly joy supreme
Gilds all around, the groves and mountains gleam;
And, over all, he sees the form divine,
The Uncreated in his creatures shine,
Bright as in drops of dew the sun's reflected beam.

Canto viii.

A table of contents prefixed to each canto should not be forgotten in a second edition; it is a desideratum, which, when supplied, will give a clear and connected view of the texture and conduct of this inimitable fable.

* I am happy to perceive that the very learned and ingenious author of *The Pursuits of Literature* entertains an opinion of

a glowing hand. *Arthur, or the Northern Enchantment*, which has deservedly given Mr. Hole a place in our epic arrangement, has considerable merit in the construction of its fable. The agency of the northern *Parcæ* or Weird Sisters on the one side, and of Merlin on the other, forms a bold and well-chosen system of machinery, whilst the human characters are pencilled with vigour and discrimination. Its interest, however, as already observed in a preceding number, would have been greater, had an appeal to the heart been more frequently introduced. The versification is free and varied, the poet having happily avoided that monotony which in works of length usually awaits the employment of the couplet.

Of the *Calvary* of Mr. Cumberland, I have already given an analysis of considerable length, and shall here therefore only say, that he has so successfully emulated the spirit and sublimity of Milton, that his work will probably descend

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this lady similar to that expressed in Number XVII. of this work. These are his emphatic words when censuring the common race of Novel-writers: "Not so the mighty magician of THE MYSTERIES OF UDOLPHO, bred and nourished by the Florentine Muses in their sacred solitary caverns, amid the paler shrines of Gothic superstition, and in all the dreariness of enchantment: a poetess whom Ariosto would with rapture have acknowledged, as the

La nudrita
Damigella Trivulzia AL SACRO SPECO." *Orland. Furios.* c. 46.

Vide seventh edition, p. 58.

to remote ages; and when the name of our divine bard shall be sounded by admiring posterity that of Cumberland will not be distant far.

Mr. Southey's *Joan of Arc*, though incorrect, and written with inexcusable rapidity, reflects great credit on his genius and abilities; the sentiments are noble and generous, and burn with an enthusiastic ardour for liberty; the characters, especially that of his Heroine, are well supported, and his visionary scenes are rich with bold and energetic imagery. His fable, however, I cannot but consider peculiarly unfortunate, as directly militating against national pride and opinion: most epic writers have been solicitous to acquire popularity by aggrandizing the heroic deeds and bold emprise of their respective nations; but in *Joan of Arc* the tide of censure falls upon one of our most gallant Kings, and who has ever been a favourite with the multitude. It is true that the votaries of ambition scatter desolation in their train, and merit the indignant reprobation of every friend to humanity; but had Mr. Southey consulted his own fame and popularity, he had chosen a different subject as the vehicle of his sentiments. The versification of this poem is in many parts very beautiful, and would have been altogether so, had the author condescended to bestow more time on its elaboration. * In his promised epic on the Discovery of America by Madoc, the

* Since these observations were made, Mr. Southey has published a second edition of the *Joan of Arc*; in which many and great alterations, and, for the most part, highly to the advantage of the work, have taken place.

ingenious poet, it is hoped, will apply more care and assiduity to the necessary work of perfecting and polishing. *

Now, if we may be allowed to place Ossian in opposition to Milton, inferior in sublimity perhaps, though certainly infinitely more pathetic, our epic column will stand firm upon its base, and rearing its majestic shaft, attract, through distant ages, the eye of genius and of taste.

The Drama, in the sixteenth and during a great part of the seventeenth century, was

* *Madoc*, which appeared shortly after the last edition of this work, greatly and deservedly extended the author's fame. It is in many parts highly interesting and pathetic, and possesses a large share of that touching and romantic sweetness of description which steals upon us with such fascination in the tender pages of Sophocles. Not more than justice has been done to this beautiful poem in the following characteristic sonnet from the pen of Mr. T. Park.

SONNET.

To Robert Southey, Esq.

Southey! Thy mind hath long aspired to prove
True poets are no triflers; though they seem
Near fields of amaranth at times to rove,
Culling more pansies. Rightly didst thou deem,
And now approv'st thy deeming: Madoc's lay
Shall lift thee to the sphery clime, where erst
The bard of Eden wing'd his trackless way: —
For such heroic hymning scarce hath burst
From British harp, since Milton's ear did steal
Music from Siloa; or the Cymbrian strain
Of hoary Llywarch, rous'd to vengeful zeal
The host of dread Cadwallon. More humane
Thy numerous verse; and thence, more pure thy plea
To wear the palmy wreath of bardic poesy!

written with little attention to the rules of composition, and, except in the hands of Shakspeare, was for the most part either monstrous or abortive. The plays of Massinger, and Beaumont and Fletcher, abound with the wildest incongruities both in matter and form; and though Jonson was infinitely more regular, yet he wanted, in tragedy at least, the essential of genius. Succeeding poets have however made nearer approaches to the perfectibility of art, and few tragedies were produced during the eighteenth century, without due regard to mechanism of fable, to decorum of scene, and propriety of style. But as attention to the dictates of criticism will not alone constitute a good play, it is necessary to shew that the poets within our prescribed period want not what is otherwise vital and requisite to their art. In tragedy, as was observed before, we must avoid entering the lists with Shakspeare, but with his contemporary bards we can court comparison in triumph. With this exception, who can produce a tragedy, from the bosom of the sixteenth or prior half of the seventeenth century, that, in genuine dramatic excellence, shall rank with the *Grecian Daughter* or *Gamester* of Moore, the *Douglas* of Home, the *Elfrida* and *Caractacus* of Mason, or the *Mysterious Mother* of Walpole. Though the subject of this last piece be singularly horrid and almost disgusting, yet the fable is conducted with such inimitable skill, that it may in this respect be considered as approximating nearer to perfection than any other drama extant, the Œdipus

Tyrannus of Sophocles even not excepted. Some of the scenes in Douglas are of admirable pathos and beauty, and its diction has been justly and generally approved. The classical productions of Mason would have done honour to Athens in her most refined period, and the tragedies of Moore have been bathed with the tears of thousands. If we turn to comedy, the superiority of modern genius is decisive; for, I imagine, it will readily be conceded that the *Suspicious Husband*, the *Jealous Wife*, the *Clandestine Marriage*, and the *School for Scandal*, are perfectly unrivalled. The comedies of Mr. Cumberland likewise possess very considerable merit, especially his *West Indian* and *Wheel of Fortune*. Comedy has in every nation been slow in attaining perfection. Aristophanes, more remarkable for scurrility than for wit and humour, was contemporary with Euripides; and though Shakspeare has many characters of the most genuine humour, he has not furnished us with an instance of legitimate comedy, unless indeed the *Merry Wives of Windsor* may be termed such. In fact, before the time of Congreve and Cibber, pure and unmixed comedy was nearly unknown, and only acquired its more polished and perfect state when the drama of Colman and Sheridan appeared. *

* The *Acting Drama* has, in both its provinces, since this period, I am sorry to say, been rapidly degenerating. To such a state, indeed, of mediocrity has it now fallen, that the public mind begins to despair of again seeing any thing in this department which may be entitled to claim the honours of genius and originality.

Lyric poetry may be said to have had no existence among us before Dryden composed his celebrated ode, for the Pindarics of Cowley have small pretensions to the title. Mr. Headley therefore could appropriate no part of his table to this sublime province of the art, and which has indeed only attained its highest excellencies in the productions of Collins and Gray. As I have, in another place, entered largely into the merits of our English lyric poets, nothing more is here necessary than to remark, that the names collected under this department would do honour to any age or country, and would alone be adequate to prove that the spirit and genius of our poetry have liberally partaken of those energies which, in the present period, have been so powerfully directed through the walks of science and the depths of oriental literature.

The naturalist and the poet are not in frequent combination; an unwearied attention to the features of nature, and, at the same time, a power of selecting the more striking circumstances, and of so vividly impressing them on the mind of the reader that the original shall even seem tame in the comparison, are faculties which have fallen to the lot of few. Lucretius, Virgil, and Thomson, enjoyed however this happy union of talents; and it is with peculiar pride and pleasure that in our day we can point to the name of a poet who equally excels in these particulars, and to an exquisite felicity of diction superadds the most pathetic morality, and a vein of original and justly applied satire.

As long as a taste for simplicity and energy of style, for the charms of Nature, of Virtue, and of Religion, shall exist, so long will the *Task* of *Cowper* continue a favourite with the public. Mr. Gisborne's *Walks in a Forest* have also a title to particular notice, as possessing just claims to original description. The varied operation of the seasons on Forest-scenery, much accurate painting in natural history, and a number of picturesque minutiæ that have escaped the notice of preceding delineators, render this work peculiarly attractive, nor is it deficient in pathetic incident or digressional decoration. It is obvious that a great source of novelty to our poetry may be derived from the improved state of natural history, and many of our writers seem willing to avail themselves of the treasure. In the pieces of Mr. Hurdis are to be found several faithful draughts from nature, beautifully coloured, and unoccupied by any preceding artist. Sotheby's *Tour through Wales*, and Bidlake's *Sea* *, display also much that is valuable both in design and execution; and, upon the whole, we may assuredly say that in no period has descriptive poetry been cultivated with more success. †

In the age of Elizabeth, Didactic poetry had not received its most regular and perfect

* Since the second edition of this work, Mr. Bidlake has published a poem, entitled The Summer's Eve. It contains much pleasing and original Imagery; and I can strongly recommend it to the lovers of Poetry and rural scenery.

† I need scarcely remark that great accessions have been lately made to this class of poetry by the masterly productions of *Wordsworth*, *Scott*, and *Crabbe*.

form, that is, no poem had been written on the plan of the Georgics. Since that reign, however, numerous have been the labourers in this department; Phillips, Somervile, Pope, Dyer, Akenside, and Armstrong, have by their respective attempts erected unperishable monuments of their genius and talents; and during the portion of time now under consideration stands foremost the name of Mason, whose *English Garden* I must consider as the most finished and interesting specimen we possess of this mode of composition. The subject is alluring, "a theme once bless'd by Virgil's happy choice."

Atque equidem, extremo ni jam sub fine laborum
Vela traham, et terris festinem ad vertere proram:
Forsitan et pingues hortos quæ cura colendi
Ornaret, canerem, &c. *Georg.* 4.

And the diction and versification have the charm of sweetness and simplicity. The great attraction however of this beautiful poem consists in its so frequently and powerfully appealing to the tender feelings: through the whole runs a vein of pathetic reflection; and the story of Nerina, which occupies the fourth book, and indirectly continues the precept, is narrated in so masterly a manner, and with so many genuine strokes of nature, that few persons, I should hope, are to be found who could peruse it without the tribute of a tear. It has indeed been objected by Mr. Pye * that it is too

* Commentary on the Poetics of Aristotle, p. 164

pathetic for the species of poem in which it is placed; but if this be an error, it is of a kind that will readily be allowed for by those who have felt the influences of pity, and who lament departed worth and beauty.

The epistles of Mr. Hayley on Painting, History, and Epic Poetry, would perhaps more properly have been thrown under the title *Historical*, had I thought it worth while thus to designate a column for the admission of a single writer. They inculcate however so much elegant and judicious criticism, and diffuse so much light over their respective subjects, that they may not unaptly find a place in the didactic compartment. The versification of these pieces is peculiarly smooth, correct, and flowing, but not unfrequently deficient in energy and compression. The characters are in general justly drawn, and several display a warmth of fancy and a beauty in illustration highly worthy of applause. I would particularly instance those of *Herodotus* and *Livy*, *Virgil*, *Lucan*, and *Ariosto*. The addresses likewise to *Romney*, *Gibbon*, and *Mason*, are well conceived, impressive, and appropriate; and as proofs of pathetic powers, the *Death of Chatterton*, and the author's *Apostrophe* to his mother, may ever be appealed to with triumph.

The *Infancy* of Dr. Downman has several splendid passages, and some interesting episodic parts, but the subject is certainly an unhappy one; the details of the nursery, and the rules for the preservation of infantine health, being little accommodated to the genius of poetry.

There is merit however in encountering a difficulty almost insuperable, and the Doctor perhaps has rendered his work as inviting as the nature of his theme would permit.

The *English Orator* embraces a more fertile field, and Mr. Polwhele has developed the principles of eloquence, and their application to the Bar, the Senate, and the Pulpit, in very harmonious verse. The little narratives, introduced by way of elucidation, have much that is beautiful in their conception and execution; and in the fourth book, the episode of *Villicus the Curate* is particularly pleasing.

Dr. Darwin has lately favoured the world with a poem perfectly original in its design, and whose versification is the most correct and brilliant in our language. Nothing can exceed the exquisite taste with which the diction of the *Botanic Garden* is selected; and the facility which the author enjoys of decribing, without the smallest injury to the polish and melody of his lines, the most intricate objects of nature and of art, is truly astonishing. A playfulness of fancy, an unbounded variety of fiction, an imagination wild and terrific as that of Dante or Shakspeare, and an intimate knowledge of every branch of science and natural history, conspire to render this poem perfectly unique. Scripture narrative, ancient mythology, Gothic superstition, and the miracles of philosophy, are drawn in to decorate or elucidate the history or metamorphoses of his plants; and the bold and beautiful personifications which every where start forward, and with a projection which in-

dicates the hand of genius, infuse life and vigour through the work. The destruction of the armies of Cambyses and of Sennacherib, the prosopopœïa of the Ague and of the Nightmare, the scene of Medea and her children, and the group of wild animals drinking, are, I verily think, for strength of imagination, and vivacity and richness of colouring, unequalled. Impartial criticism, however, compels us to observe that the Botanic Garden is not without defects; two leading ones may be mentioned; a monotony in the versification, arising from its uniform and excessive splendour, and a want of due connection between the different parts of the poem; the descriptions are nearly insulated, that is, they are deficient in that kind of combination which is necessary to form a concording and interesting whole.

Who can contrast these didactic poets with the philosophical and metaphysical ones of the age of Elizabeth, and for an instant hesitate where to bestow a decided preference!

As it is presumed that no person can possess a taste so singular, and, I may add, so perverted, as to esteem Donne, Marston, or even Hall, superior to Churchill and Anstey, any considerable comment on this province of the art will be readily dispensed with. To the energy and severity of Churchill, and the playful humour of the *Bath Guide*, we may also add the poignant effusions of Peter Pindar, the elegant and well-timed satire of Gifford, and the powerful, nervous, and sometimes sublime strains of the unknown author of *The Pursuits of Literature*. This last

production, though in a few places unnecessarily caustic and querulous, and too indiscriminate in the objects of its literary censure, is the product of extensive erudition, and of a wish to befriend the noblest efforts of patriotism and religion. The poet has brought to his task powers alike vigorous and multiform, and has given to his country in the hour of difficulty and danger certainly no trifling, no unimportant aid. Several smaller anonymous productions of acknowledged excellence in this department, have, within the last thirty years, been presented to the public. To enumerate these would occupy too much room. The *Heroic Epistle*, however, *to Sir William Chambers*, *the Archæological Epistle to Dean Milles*, and the *Probationary Odes*, as possessing very prominent and distinguished merit, should not be passed in silence.

In a late elegant critique in the *Monthly Review*, and which forms an exception to the complaint at the commencement of the preceding number, occur the following judicious observations: "That the human mind is not at all times adequate to every customary exertion, — or that, while it is in a progressive state with respect to its general attainments, some one of its energies should necessarily droop and degenerate, — are not among the doctrines which we hold; and though it has been common to apply such a strain of speculation to the works of fancy, in a period distinguished for scientific improvements, we are fully convinced, from the productions that come under our survey, that the theory is not founded in

fact. *In particular, the experience of a few past years has abundantly proved to us, that never was there a time in which English poetry was cultivated with more genius, nor with happier effect.*" * These remarks will apply in full force to our column of *Miscellaneous Poets*, which, considering the period of time we have limited ourselves to, has never been equalled, and probably never will be excelled. What can be more exquisite than the poetry of Goldsmith, whose versification is, without any exception, more sweet and harmonious than that of any other poet, and whose sentiments and imagery are equally beautiful and pathetic. Dr. Beattie has observed that "several cantos might be mentioned of the *Fairy Queen*, the preservation of which would not compensate the loss of *The Castle of Indolence*." † With yet greater propriety might this be affirmed as to the supposed loss of his own charming poem *The Minstrel*, whose delightful pictures of nature, whose pensive morality and fascinating simplicity of expression, render it inexpressibly dear and interesting: indeed he who can read it without sensations of rapture, must be lost as the dead to harmony and feeling. *The Pleasures of Memory*, by Mr. Rogers, is another effort of the modern muses which calls for admiration; the subject is happily chosen, and its polished flow of verse and tender sentiment have justly made it a favourite with the public. Hayley's *chef-*

* Vide Monthly Review for July 1797, p. 278.
† Beattie on the Usefulness of Classical Learning, p. 499.

d'œuvre, *The Triumphs of Temper*, must be also noticed in this place, as I have not been able to class it under any of the preceding heads, and indeed, it seems well entitled to the honour of forming a new species of poetry, for in structure and design it differs materially from what has been denominated the Heroi-comic poem. Its visionary scenes are drawn and tinted with a masterly pencil, and do great credit to the Italian school, in whose spirit and style they have been conceived and executed, and his Heroine, all gentle and interesting, fully develops the magnetic influence of that sweetest of all possessions, an amiable temper. It would occupy too much room, and would indeed be superfluous, to dwell at large upon all the excellent productions of this class, popular as most of them are. When to those already mentioned, we can add the *Sympathy* of Pratt, the *Louisa* of Seward, the *Peru* of Williams, the *Sonnets* of Charlotte Smith and Bowles, the *Country Justice* of Langhorne, the *Influence of Local Attachment* by Polwhele, the *Poems* of Burns, and a variety of other productions of no less merit, the opinion of the Monthly Critic will be sufficiently justified, and the vast superiority of our miscellaneous poets over those of the Elizabethan period incontrovertibly established. *

* To this constellation of Miscellaneous Poets may now be added a star of the first magnitude, as constituted by the truly great and original effusions of Lord Byron. Would that the morality of these far-famed productions had been equal to their poetic worth!

To institute any comparison between the *Translators* of the two ages would be futile and even absurd; let the reader cast his eye over the opposed columns, and he will not for an instant demand it. I shall therefore confine myself to a very few observations, and shall in the first place remark that translation, both in prose and poetry, has been extensively and very successfully cultivated during the present reign. Among the names which form our catalogue, are to be found some of the first literary characters in the nation, and their attempts to transfuse the beauties of their originals have improved the public taste, and opened to the mere English scholar a wide field of amusement. The Georgics of Virgil have received new attractions in the translation of Warton. The elegant simplicity of Terence has met with an admirable vehicle in the well chosen and familiar blank verse of Colman; Horace assumes a more pleasing national garb from the assiduities of Mr. Boscawen; and the gigantic sublimity of Æschylus is preserved in all its force in the bold and nervous diction of Potter. Though Cowper has been too literal in his Homer, and too inattentive to the melody of his versification, yet has he infused much more of the simple majesty and manner of the divine bard than his predecessor Pope, whose splendid and highly ornamented paraphrase is more adapted to the genius of Ovid than of Homer. It may with truth also be affirmed of Mr. Cowper's work, that where the Grecian takes his boldest flights, his Translator follows with a vigorous

wing, and has given the sublimer portions of the Iliad in a manner equally faithful and spirited. That satiety too which is so frequently experienced in reading any considerable quantity of Pope's couplets, is not felt from the blank verse of his last translator, which possesses a manifest superiority in its variety of pause and rhythm. In fact, that plainness of diction which in the perusal of Cowper has given such offence to the fastidious, has been the result of mature judgment: for that the poet knew how to impart the most exquisite polish to his lines, is evident from the specimens, quoted by Mr. Hayley, of his version of the Latin and Italian poetry of Milton, than which nothing can be more musical and finished. *

Of the Italian poets we possess also some good translations; the Ariosto of Hoole I think much superior to his Tasso, and the *Inferno* of that wonderful genius Dante † is well laid open to the curiosity of the public by

*, Of the translations from the ancient classics which have appeared during the course of the last sixteen years, by many degrees the most valuable has been the Virgil of Mr. Sotheby, who, in transferring the *Georgics*, has afforded to the English reader a much better idea of the genius and character of Virgil than any preceding translator.

† In this their primal poet, observes the Author of The Pursuits of Literature, there is an originality and a hardihood of antiquity. His soul was dark and sullen; it was proud and full of his wrongs. Errans beta parum et dejecto lumina vultu. He passed through imaginary realms without the sun, to the confines of light and hope. The day shone full upon him, and the beams were from on high. His draught of men and their passions is eternal. His language was like himself, deep,

Mr. Boyd *: but no poet perhaps has ever been so greatly indebted to a Translator as Camöens, whose *Lusiad*, in the very elegant and spirited version of Mr. Mickle, has perfectly the air of an English original; its defects are concealed or mitigated, while its beauties catch double lustre from the British dress.

A taste for Arabic and Persian poetry has been acquired through the labours of the Asiatic Society; and Sir William Jones† has par-

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and full of matter: its strength and harmony may be best expressed by his Tuscan brother *:

> Aspro concento, orribile armonia
> D'alte querele, d'ululi, e di strida,
> Instramamente concordar s'udia.
>
> ARIOSTO, *O. F.* cant. 16.

* This, however, and every previous version of Danté, has been thrown into the shade by the admirable translation of Mr. Cary, who has succeeded in giving to his copy the air and spirit of an original.

† The death of this great man is an irreparable loss to Christianity, to science, and to literature.

> He—whom Indus and the Ganges mourn,
> The glory of their banks, from Isis torn,
> In learning's strength is fled, in judgment's prime,
> In science temp'rate, various and sublime.
> To him familiar every legal doom,
> The courts of Athens, or the halls of Rome,
> Or Hindoo Vedas taught; for him the Muse
> Distill'd from every flow'r Hyblæan dews;
> Firm, when exalted, in demeanour grave,
> Mercy and truth were his, he lov'd to save.
> His mind collected, at opinion's shock
> JONES stood unmov'd, and, from the Christian rock,
> Celestial brightness beaming on his breast,
> He saw THE STAR, and worshipp'd in the East.
>
> *Pursuits of Literature*, p. 122.

* Pursuits of Literature, Introductory Letter, p. 26.

ticularly distinguished himself by several incomparable translations of and acute criticisms on the poets of the East. For many elegant Arabian poems also, we are highly indebted to Professor Carlyle. Unacquainted with the originals, I am incompetent to judge of their fidelity; but as beautiful and exquisitely finished pieces, they are entitled to warm commendation.

Upon comparing the arrangement we have thus given of the chief poets in the two periods, and of their principal productions, it must strike every reader that Mr. Headley has been greatly too partial to his phalanx of ancients. Let us for a moment reflect what various and exquisite poems, only the last forty-five years have produced, and we shall be utterly at a loss to conceive how any author could assert that the "Key that oped the sacred source of sympathetic tears, seems now, and has done for a century past, irrecoverably lost." It is evident, I think, from the survey just taken, that never was there an age more distinguished than the present for poetic excellence in almost every department of the art; nor can the sternest critic, who shall impartially compare the two tables, and recollect that the latter embraces only half the space of time allotted to the former, avoid acknowledging the great merit and lustre of his contemporaries. If in the Drama we confess the superiority of Shakspeare; in the epic field, having an Ossian to produce, we are nearly upon a level; and in every other province a marked and decisive

pre-eminence must be granted to the poets of the present reign. In the Lyric, Descriptive, and Didactic columns there can be no competition, nor can any, I should imagine, be hinted at in those appropriated to Satire, Miscellaneous Poets and Translators.

In thus combating the opinions of those who have been solicitous to depreciate our present poetry, I have selected the text of Mr. Headley as conveying the sentiments of the whole body, and more especially as his general good taste might probably for a time even impart weight and consequence to a critical error. Of the Editor of the *Select Beauties of Ancient English Poetry*, as a Scholar, a Critic, and a Man, I entertain a very high opinion: he was beloved by his friends, I understand, with an enthusiasm which his amiable qualities fully justified; and I have only to lament that his prejudices in favour of our elder poetry should so far have vitiated his judgment as to preclude any fair estimate of the value of modern genius.

No. XXX.

Offspring of other times, ye visions old!
Legends, no more by gentle hands unroll'd,
Magnanimous deceits! where favour'd youth
Finds short repose from formidable truth!
Oh witness if, e'er silent in your praise,
I've pass'd in vice or sloth inglorious days,
But rais'd for you my firm unalter'd voice,
Fancy my guide, and solitude my choice.
Pursuits of Literature.

THE popular superstitions of every country afford not only amusement to the credulous and inquisitive, but furnish subjects of curious speculation to the philosopher and historian. The genius and manners of a people, their progress in civilization, and even the very character of the country and climate they exist in, may, in a great measure, be ascertained from the nature of their mythological creed. In the early stages of society, where no extensive or complicated union has taken place for mutual defence and protection, man is exposed to perpetual and numerous dangers; in a state of almost continual warfare with the tribes around him, or employed in the severe and almost equally dangerous toils of the chase for his daily subsistence,

he is altogether indebted for life and safety to his own individual exertions; hunger and revenge call aloud for gratification, and occupy every intellectual effort of the Being thus situated, every direction of his muscular strength. Obnoxious to various perils, at one time almost perishing for want of food, at another putting in practice every wily stratagem to entrap a foe or protect himself; ignorant of the causes and effects of all the mighty phenomena of nature which surround him, and conscious, from dire experience, of his own frequent inefficiency to gratify his appetites, or satiate his resentments, the savage naturally looks for assistance beyond the pale of mortality. Unacquainted however with any rational system of religion, he calls into being, and gives local habitation and a name to, the wanderings of a terrified imagination; the thunder, the lightning, and the whirlwind, the roaring of the mountain-torrent, the sighing of the gathering storm, the illusive meteors of night, and the fleeting forms of clouds and mist, are with him the appalling tones and awful visitations of supernatural beings. He hears the spirit of the whirlwind or the water shriek, and either implores the assistance, or deprecates the wrath of agents whose powers are gigantic, and whose modes of operation are illimitable and unseen. Should he inhabit a country peculiarly rude and gloomy in its aspect, where the almost boundless heath, the stupendous mountain, or the darkening forest form the prominent features of the landscape, where silence and solitude, unbroken but by the harsh

screaming of the bird of prey, or the tumults of the rushing tempest, brood over the scene in solemn majesty, his superstitious fears partake of the wild and melancholy sublimity which the objects before him are calculated to inspire, and breathe a much severer spirit than the credulity of a country more fertile and cheerful in its produce and appearance could give rise to.

No territory in Europe better exemplifies these observations than Scotland, in which, while a peculiar system of superstition, sublime and awful in its general texture, and strongly indicative of the country, has long reigned in the *Highlands* of that kingdom, in its *Lowland* districts, a mild and more sportive vein of fabling prevails, well adapted to the beautiful and pastoral scenery of that delightful region.

Dr. Beattie has with much felicity of language described these two portions of Scotland, and drawn their discriminative appearances with a masterly pen. With regard to the Highlands, he observes, they "are a picturesque, but in general a melancholy country. Long tracts of mountainous desert, covered with dark heath, and often obscured by misty weather; narrow valleys, thinly inhabited, and bounded by precipices resounding with the fall of torrents; a soil so rugged, and a climate so dreary, as in many parts to admit neither the amusements of pasturage, nor the labours of agriculture; the mournful dashing of waves along the friths and lakes that intersect the country; the portentous noises which every change of the wind, and

every increase and diminution of the waters, is apt to raise in a lonely region, full of echoes, and rocks, and caverns; the grotesque and ghastly appearance of such a landscape by the light of the moon: — objects like these diffuse a gloom over the fancy, which may be compatible enough with occasional and social merriment, but cannot fail to tincture the thoughts of a native in the hour of silence and solitude. —— Let it be observed, also, that the ancient highlanders of Scotland had hardly any other way of supporting themselves than by hunting, fishing, or war, professions that are continually exposed to fatal accidents. And hence, no doubt, additional horrors would often haunt their solitude, and a deeper gloom overshadow the imagination even of the hardiest native.

"What then would it be reasonable to expect from the fanciful tribe, from the musicians and poets of such a region? Strains, expressive of joy, tranquillity, or the softer passions? No: their style must have been better suited to their circumstances. And so we find in fact that their music is. The wildest irregularity appears in its composition; the expression is warlike, and melancholy, and approaches even to the terrible.— And that their poetry is almost uniformly mournful, and their views of nature dark and dreary, will be allowed, by all who admit of the authenticity of Ossian; and not doubted by any who believe these fragments of highland poetry to be genuine, which many old people, now alive, of that country, remember to have

heard in their youth, and were then taught to refer to a pretty high antiquity." *

In the Essay on Gothic superstition we have already observed that the popular creed of the Lowlands of Scotland is nearly, if not altogether similar to the lighter Gothic; for the Picts, in fact, who for eight centuries had possession of the Lowlands, were a tribe from the north of Scandinavia; the Saxons emigrated some centuries after from the south, and both spoke a language founded on the Gothic or Scythian. Dropping therefore any further consideration of this species of mythology, we shall confine ourselves to the detail of those traditionary superstitions peculiar to the highlanders, and which, as originating among the Celtæ, the most ancient perhaps of European nations, have no small claim upon our curiosity and attention.

These, as discoverable in the poems attributed to Ossian and other northern bards of nearly equal supposed antiquity, certainly possess strong marks of the rude society, simple manners, and gloomy credulity of the period to which they have been assigned; for though it be impossible to conceive that poems so elaborate and complete as *Fingal* and *Temora* could be transmitted by tradition through fourteen centuries, yet is it very probable that superstitions, which appear in some measure to have been the necessary offspring of the climate and country, and which from their wild and terrible nature

* Beattie on Poetry and Music, p. 169.

would make a powerful impression upon the inhabitants, should descend little changed through a series of barbarous ages; these have been seized upon by the editor of Ossian with effect, for notwithstanding the vicissitudes and progress of civilization, it may, I believe, with truth be asserted that, little more than a century ago, nearly all the superstitions of the Fingalian æra existed in full force in the Highlands of Scotland, and consequently could not escape the *researches* of a poet desirous of tinging his productions with the colours of antiquity. The highlander who fed his cattle on the dark and unfrequented heath, or on the side of some storm-beat mountain, and who was frequently compelled to spend the night exposed to all the inclemencies of the weather, listened with the same emotion to the whistling of the winds, or the dashing of the torrents, saw the same apparitions and meteors, and heard the same portentous shriekings of the spirit of the night, as the hunters of woody Morven; and perhaps even now, amid the less frequented parts of the Highlands, and on the lone shores of the romantic Hebrides, still linger the awful relics of the Celtic creed.

With bold imagination warm,
They see the genius of the storm
  Rear on the hill his cloud-built throne,
While trackless as the rushing air,
  The spirits of the dead repair
Nightly to chaunt the song that speaks of worlds unknown. WEST.

As, according to some historians, Odin was the leader of his tribe from the frontiers of Asiatic Sarmatia into Sweden, so was Fingal, probably, the conductor of a tribe of Celts from Ireland into Caledonia, and thus the Finigalian race were to the Scots what the Titanic were to the Greeks, or the Odinic to the * Goths. Nothing, however, can be more distinct or opposed than the Gothic and Celtic religions; the one breathes the most sanguinary and ferocious spirit; the other, though mingled with a melancholy sublimity, and displaying great wildness of imagination, is yet friendly to the gentler virtues, to the best emotions of the heart. The Halls of Odin and of Fingal, where the spirits of the departed received the rewards due to their glorious actions while on earth, are strikingly illustrative of the contrast between these ancient superstitions. In the former, the votaries of the Scandinavian Deity, after daily cutting each other to pieces for amusement, adjourned to a plentiful feast, and drank ale out of the hollow skulls of their enemies. *Balderi patris in aula*, exclaims the dying Lodbrog, *bibemus cervisiam ex concavis crateribus cranioram.*† In the latter, the warriors of Morven listened in rapture to the praises of their bards, who sung of friendship, love, and heroism, or flew with their friends on clouds, or hovered with protecting influence over those they loved

* Vide Pinkerton on the Origin of Scottish Poetry, pp. 41. and 17.

† See the Epicedium of Regner Lodbrog, as translated literally from the Original by Olaus Wormius.

on earth. In the poem of *Berrathon* are two beautiful descriptions of the ideal palace of Fingal: Ossian, lamenting the death of Malvina, the daughter of Toscar, thus appositely introduces his first delineation: "Soon hast thou set, O Malvina, daughter of generous Toscar! But thou risest like the beam of the East, among the spirits of thy friends, where they sit, in their stormy halls, the chambers of the thunder! A cloud hovers over Cona. Its blue curling sides are high. The winds are beneath it, with their wings. Within it is the dwelling of Fingal. There the hero sits in darkness. His airy spear is in his hand. His shield, half covered with clouds, is like the darkened moon, when one half still remains in the wave, and the other looks sickly on the field!

"His friends sit around the king, on mist! They hear the songs of Ullin: he strikes the half-viewless harp: he raises the feeble voice. The lesser heroes, with a thousand meteors, light the airy hall." *

The conclusion of this poem is exquisitely pathetic: Ossian is represented aged and blind, and departing to the halls of his fathers: "Lead, son of Alpin," sings the venerable Bard, "lead the aged to his woods. The winds begin to rise. The dark wave of the lake resounds. Bends there not a tree from Mora with its branches bare? It bends, son of Alpin, in the rustling blast. My harp hangs on a blasted branch. The sound of its strings is mournful. Does the wind touch thee, O harp, or is it some passing

* Ossian's Poems, vol. ii. p. 195.

ghost! It is the hand of Malvina! Bring me the harp, son of Alpin. Another song shall rise. My soul shall depart in the sound. My fathers shall hear it in their airy hall. Their dim faces shall hang, with joy, from their clouds; and their hands receive their son. The aged oak bends over the stream. It sighs with all its moss. The withered fern whistles near, and mixes, as it waves, with Ossian's hair.

"Strike the harp, and raise the song: be near, with all your wings, ye winds. Bear the mournful sound away to Fingal's airy hall. Bear it to Fingal's hall, that he may hear the voice of his son: the voice of him that praised the mighty.

"The blast of the north opens thy gates, O king! I behold thee sitting on mist, dimly gleaming in all thine arms. Thy form now is not the terror of the valiant. It is like a watery cloud; when we see the stars behind it, with their weeping eyes. Thy shield is the aged moon: thy sword a vapour half-kindled with fire. Dim and feeble is the chief, who travelled in brightness before! But thy steps are on the winds of the desert. The storms are darkening in thy hand. Thou takest the sun in thy wrath, and hidest him in thy clouds. The sons of little men are afraid. A thousand showers descend. But when thou comest forth in thy mildness, the gale of the morning is near thy course. The sun laughs in his blue fields. The grey stream winds in its vale. The bushes shake their green heads in the wind. The roes bound toward the desert.

"There is a murmur in the heath! the stormy winds abate! I hear the voice of Fingal. Long has it been absent from mine ear! 'Come, Ossian, come away,' he says; 'Fingal has received his fame. We passed away, like flames that had shone for a season. Our departure was in renown. Though the plains of our battles are dark and silent, our fame is in the four grey stones. The voice of Ossian has been heard. The harp has been strung in Selma. Come, Ossian, come away,' he says; 'come fly with thy fathers on clouds.' I come, I come, thou king of men! The life of Ossian fails. I begin to vanish on Cona. My steps are not seen in Selma. Beside the stone of Mora I shall fall asleep. The winds whistling in my grey hair shall not awaken me. Depart on thy wings, O wind! thou canst not disturb the rest of the bard. The night is long, but his eyes are heavy. Depart, thou rustling blast.

"But why art thou sad, son of Fingal? Why grows the cloud of thy soul? The chiefs of other times are departed. They have gone without their fame. The sons of future years shall pass away. Another race shall arrive. The people are like the waves of ocean: like the leaves of woody Morven, they pass away in the rustling blast, and other leaves lift their green heads on high.

"Did thy beauty last, O Ryno? Stood the strength of car-borne, Oscar? Fingal himself departed. The halls of his fathers forgot his steps. Shalt thou then remain, thou aged

bard! when the mighty have failed? But my fame shall remain, and grow like the oak of Morven; which lifts its broad head to the storm, and rejoices in the course of the wind!" *

These descriptions of the future state of the Caledonian heroes display a system equally sublime and beautiful, and which is altogether free from the fierce and barbarous spirit of the Gothic superstition. The terrible Odin, indeed, covered with blood, and glorying in slaughter, whom the rough warriors of Scandinavia invoked as the God of battles and the dispenser of victory, is treated by Fingal with defiance and even contempt. The combat of the Celtic chief with the Spirit of Loda, or Odin, one of the most sublime passages in the poems of Ossian, fully indicates the disapprobation and disbelief of the Bard of Cona as to the vaunted agency of this ferocious deity.

"A blast came from the mountain; on its wings was the Spirit of Loda. He came to his place in his terrors, and shook his dusky spear. His eyes appear like flames in his dark face; his voice is like distant thunder. Fingal advanced his spear in night, and raised his voice on high.

"Son of night, retire: call thy winds, and fly! Why dost thou come to my presence, with thy shadowy arms? Do I fear thy gloomy form, Spirit of dismal Loda? Weak is thy shield of clouds; feeble is that meteor, thy sword!

* Berrathon, vol. ii. p. 205.

The blast rolls them together; and thou thyself art lost. Fly from my presence, son of night! call thy winds and fly!"

"'Dost thou force me from my place?' replied the hollow voice. 'The people bend before me. I turn the battle in the field of the brave. I look on the nations, and they vanish: my nostrils pour the blast of death. I come abroad on the winds: the tempests are before my face. But my dwelling is calm, above the clouds; the fields of my rest are pleasant!'

"'Dwell in thy pleasant fields,' said the king. 'Let Comhal's son be forgot. Do my steps ascend, from my hills, into thy peaceful plains? Do I meet thee, with a spear, on thy cloud, Spirit of dismal Loda? Why then dost thou frown on me? Why shake thine airy spear? Thou frownest in vain: I never fled from the mighty in war. And shall the sons of the wind frighten the King of Morven? No, he knows the weakness of their arms!'

"'Fly to thy land,' replied the form; 'receive the wind and fly! The blasts are in the hollow of my hand: the course of the storm is mine. The King of Sora is my son, he bends at the stone of my power. His battle is around Caric-thura; and he will prevail! Fly to thy land, son of Combal, or feel my flaming wrath!'

"He lifted high his shadowy spear! He bent forward his dreadful height. Fingal, advancing drew his sword; the blade of dark-brown Luno. The gleaming path of the steel winds through the gloomy ghost. The form fell shape-

less into air, like a column of smoke, which the staff of the boy disturbs, as it rises from the half-extinguished furnace.

"The Spirit of Loda shrieked, as, rolled into himself, he rose on the wind. Inistere shook at the sound. The waves heard it on the deep. They stopped, in their course, with fear." *

From this wild but splendid and terrific fiction we learn that Ossian had no idea of a Being immaterial and impassive; the Scandinavian God is wounded, and shrieks with agony, and from the tenour of all his poems it is plain that he considered the souls of men as material and still susceptible of human feelings and passions. It would appear, too, that he deemed the interference of such agents among mankind, as the Spirit of Loda, improper and officious. In short, if the Bard of Cona believed in the existence of a Deity, of which, however, there is no evidence in his works, he conceived him, like the ancient Epicureans, to be indifferent to the concerns of humanity. A firm belief in a future state, such as has been described in Berrathon; in the perpetual visitation of departed spirits, and in the existence of supernatural beings who sported in the elements, and inhabited the mountain or the rock, form the outlines of the Celtic mythology as it is drawn in the poetry of Ossian. The complicated and often cruel rites of the Druids, though of Celtic origin, were, according to Macpherson, extinguished by Fingal

* Caric-thura, vol. i. p. 60.

and his warriors from political motives; and no part of this once powerful superstition suffered to remain, except the order of the Bards, who, however, in the wilds of Morven met with an attention and respect almost approaching to adoration. Magic and divination, therefore, so frequent among the Druids, though occasionally alluded to in the productions of Ossian, have no place in his poems as a part of the popular belief; and though Ossian in his extreme old age might be acquainted with the first missionaries of Christianity in Scotland or Ireland, admitting for a moment Macpherson's æra of the Caledonian to be proved, yet he certainly accepted no portion of their tenets; and even in the beautiful poems lately translated from the Irish by Miss Brooke, in which the son of Fingal is represented as conversing with St. Patrick who lived in the fifth century, he prefers the opinions of his fathers to the religion of the Saint *: now, of these Irish poems it may be observed, that though probably productions of the eighth, ninth, or tenth century, yet the universality of the tradition relative to the co-existence of the Saint and Hero is entitled to some consideration; for as the annals of Ireland have an allowed claim to considerable credit from the period of St. Patrick, and these with their poems make Ossian contemporary with the Saint, perhaps we shall do right in preferring this æra for

* See, in the Reliques of Irish Poetry, Magnus the Great, and the Chace.

the poet to Mr. Macpherson's, who has placed him towards the close of the third century.

Dismissing, however, a subject over which antiquity has drawn an almost impenetrable veil, we shall proceed to enumerate those various superstitions which took place during the supposed æra of the Fingalian race, and which certainly are of very remote origin. Nor shall we neglect noting the additions made to the popular creed in later times, and which are indeed objects of belief to the superstitious Highlander in the present day.

Connected as these peculiar opinions are with some of the most exquisite poetry in the world, and unfolding a system with regard to the agency of departed spirits, to which even the philosophy of modern times may grant a possibility of truth, and which impresses with almost equal awe the man of letters and the peasant, an hour, perhaps, will not unsatisfactorily be employed in throwing together its scattered members, and in collecting some of the most striking illustrative passages.

No people ever gave such firm credence to the visitation of the spirits of the deceased to their friends, as the Celts of Caledonia; and the ghosts of Ossian are in consequence depicted with an accuracy, with a warmth and force of colouring which, except in Shakspeare, it is in vain to look for elsewhere. "Ossian describes ghosts," says Dr. Blair, "with all the particularity of one who had seen and conversed with them, and whose imagination was full of the

impression they had left upon it. He calls up those awful and tremendous ideas which the

——— Simulacra modis pallentia miris

are fitted to raise in the human mind; and which, in Shakspeare's style, harrow up the soul." *

As a specimen of the general manner in which these superhuman beings are pourtrayed by the magic pencil of the Bard of Cona, I shall evoke the spirit of Crugal, and place before the eyes of my reader one of the noblest efforts of a strong and enthusiastic fancy.

"A dark red stream of fire comes down from the hill. Crugal sat upon the beam; he that lately fell by the hand of Swaran, striving in the battle of heroes. His face is like the beam of the setting moon. His robes are of the clouds of the hill. His eyes are like two decaying flames. Dark is the wound of his breast.—The stars dim-twinkled through his form; and his voice was like the sound of a distant stream. Dim, and in tears, he stood, and stretched his pale hand over the hero. Faintly he raised his feeble voice, like the gale of the reedy Lego. —'My ghost, O Connal! is on my native hills; but my corse is on the sands of Ullin. Thou shalt never talk with Crugal, or find his lone steps in the heath. I am light as the blast of Cromla. I move like the shadow of mist! Connal, son of Colgar, I see a cloud of death: it hovers dark over the

* Blair's Critical Dissertation on the Poems of Ossian.

plains of Lena. The sons of green Erin must fall. Remove from the field of ghosts.'—Like the darkened moon he retired, in the midst of the whistling blast."*

It is evident from various passages of this Celtic Homer, that the ancient Caledonians made a distinction between good and bad spirits, the former appearing during the day-time, and in pleasant places, the latter only in the night, and on some dreary and deserted heath, or directing the fury of the storm. They conceived also that the spirits of women retained the beauty they possessed while on earth, and moved from place to place with a quick but gliding motion. This appears from the episode of Shilric and Vinvela, where the former returns from battle to his native hills, though ignorant of the death of his mistress.

"He returned to his hills, and Vinvela was no more. He leaned on her grey mossy stone: he thought Vinvela lived. He saw her, fair, moving on the plain: but the bright form lasted not, the sun-beam fled from the field, and she was seen no more. Hear the song of Shilric; it is soft but sad!

"I sit by the mossy fountain; on the top of the hill of winds. One tree is rustling above me. Dark waves roll over the heath. The lake is troubled below. The deer descend from the hill. No hunter at a distance is seen. It is mid-day: but all is silent. Sad are my thoughts alone. Didst thou but appear, O my love! a

* Fingal, book ii. vol. i. p. 245.

wanderer on the heath! thy hair floating on the wind behind thee; thy bosom heaving on the sight; thine eyes full of tears for thy friends, whom the mist of the hill hath concealed! thee I would comfort, my love, and bring thee to thy father's house!

"But is it she that there appears, like a beam of light on the heath? bright as the moon in autumn, as the sun in a summer-storm, comest thou, O maid, over rocks, over mountains to me? She speaks: but how weak her voice! like the breeze in the reeds of the lake."

"'Returnest thou safe from the war? Where are thy friends, my love? I heard of thy death on the hill; I heard and mourned thee, Shilric!' —'Yes, my fair, I return; but I alone of my race. Thou shalt see them no more: their graves I raised on the plain. But why art thou on the desart hill? Why on the heath alone?'

"'Alone I am, O Shilric! alone in the winter house. With grief for thee I fell. Shilric, I am pale in the tomb.'

"She fleets, she sails away; as mist before the wind! And, wilt thou not stay, Vinvela! Stay and behold my tears? fair thou appearest, Vinvela! fair thou wast when alive!

"By the mossy fountain I will sit; on the top of the hill of winds. When mid-day is silent around, oh, talk with me, Vinvela! come on the light-winged gale! on the breeze of the desart come! Let me hear thy voice, as thou passest, when mid-day is silent around!"*

* Carie-thura, vol. i. p. 57.

While spirits such as these were gentle in their manners, beautiful in their appearance, and propitious to mankind, others are frequently alluded to, which were dreadful in their aspect, and malignant in their disposition.

"He rushed," says the bard, "like the terrible spirit, when he comes in the roar of a thousand storms, and scatters battle from his eyes. He sits on a cloud over Lochlin's seas. His mighty hand is on his sword. Winds lift his flaming locks! The waining moon half-lights his dreadful face. His features blended in darkness arise to view." * Again, in the first book of Fingal.

"Like the shrill spirit of a storm that sits dim on the clouds of Gormal, and enjoys the death of the mariner." †

The imagery in this last simile has furnished Mr. Mackenzie with the groundwork of an admirable description in the supplemental stanza he has inserted in Collin's Ode on the Popular Superstitions of the Highlands of Scotland; alluding to the gifted Wizards, he observes, they

——————— list the nightly yell
Of that dread spirit, whose gigantic form
The seer's entranced eye can well survey,
Through the dim air who guides the driving storm,
And points the wretched bark its destin'd prey.

* The Death of Cuthullin, vol. i. p. 385.
† Vol. i. p. 234.

Or him who hovers, on his flagging wing,
O'er the dire whirlpool, that in ocean's waste,
Draws instant down whate'er devoted thing
The failing breeze within its reach hath plac'd —
The distant seaman hears, and flies with trembling
haste.

No. XXXI.

The Bards who once the wreaths of glory wore,
Clothed in translucent veil their wond'rous lore:
The tales they sung a willing age believ'd,
Charm'd into truth, and without guile deceiv'd.
Where'er they rov'd, young Fancy and the Muse
Wav'd high their mirror of a thousand hues;
They gaz'd; and as in varying guise pourtray'd
Aërial phantoms hov'ring round them play'd,
Gave to each fleeting form, that shot along,
Existence everlasting as their song;
And as by nature's strength the tablet grew,
Rapture the pencil guided as they drew.

Pursuits of Literature.

Resuming the subject of the preceding paper, which, I trust, has not been barren of amusement, and which certainly may be deemed not only highly curious, but, in some degree, instructive, I proceed to remark that it was an article of firm belief among the ancient Scots that every warrior had an attendant spirit who, on the night preceding his death, counterfeited his form, and shrieking aloud appeared to certain persons in the attitude in which he was doomed to die. This is a species of *Second*

Sight, and seems to have been familiar to the heroes of Morven, as the *Voices of Death* so frequently mentioned in the poetry of Ossian were the foreboding shrieks of these apparitions. This superstition has maintained its ground to the present day in the Highlands, where a few persons are supposed to be still endowed with the melancholy property of hearing and discerning these tremendous spectres. They were likewise imagined capable of ascertaining on what spot a death was likely soon to happen, from the shrieking of a ghost near the place. "The accounts given, to this day, among the vulgar," observes Mr. Macpherson, "of this extraordinary matter, are very poetical. The ghost comes mounted on a meteor, and surrounds twice or thrice the place destined for the person to die; and then goes along the road through which the funeral is to pass, shrieking at intervals; at last, the meteor and ghost disappear above the burial-place." Collins, in his Ode on the Popular Superstitions, has a passage relative to this power of foreseeing death, and remarks the unhappiness which attends the possession of it.

—— they whose sight such dreary dreams engross,
With their own visions oft astonished droop,
When o'er the wat'ry strath or quaggy moss
They see the gliding ghosts unbodied troop.
Or if in sports, or on the festive green,
Their piercing glance some fated youth descry,
Who now perhaps in lusty vigour seen
And rosy health, shall soon lamented die.

For, them the viewless forms of air obey,
Their bidding heed, and at their beck repair;
They know what spirit brews the stormful day,
And heartless, oft like moody madness stare
To see the phantom train their secret work prepare.

As the Celtic nations uniformly held their bards in the highest estimation, and considered them indeed as a sacred order of men, to whom belonged the office of composing and singing the funeral elegy of the deceased, many of their superstitions are built upon the supposed employment of these illustrious characters in another state of being. They entertained an idea, that for three nights preceding the death of a warrior celebrated for his prowess and renown, the ghosts of departed bards sang on the spot where his tomb was to be erected, and round an aërial representation of his body. In the epic poem of Temora, the ghost of the ferocious Cairbar appears to his brother, the generous Cathmor, and forebodes his death by telling him that he hears the bards chaunting their awful summons.

"My form," exclaims the spectre, "is in my father's hall, like the gliding of a terrible light, which darts across the desart in a stormy night. No bard shall be wanting at thy tomb, when thou art lowly laid. The sons of song love the valiant. Cathmor, thy name is a pleasant gale. *Hark! the mournful sounds arise! On Lubar's field there is a voice! Louder still, ye shadowy ghosts! The dead were full of*

fame! Shrilly swells the feeble sound! — Ah! soon is Cathmor low!" *

Not only the bards themselves, but their very harps, were deemed instrumental in foretelling or ascertaining the death of the hero; for on the night before the fatal event, or at the time when it occurred, the harps of the bards who resided in the family of the chief, emitted, though apparently untouched, the most wild and melancholy sounds. These were conceived to arise from the *light touch of ghosts.*

"The king took his deathful spear, and struck the deeply sounding shield: his shield that hung high in night, the dismal sign of war! Ghosts fled on every side, and rolled their gathered forms on the wind. Thrice from the winding vale arose the voice of deaths. *The harps of the bards, untouched, sound mournful over the hill.*" †

"The blast came rustling through the hall and gently touched my harp. The sound was mournful and low, like the song of the tomb. Fingal heard it the first. The crowded sighs of his bosom rose. '*Some of my heroes are low,*' said the grey-haired king of Morven, '*I hear the sound of death on the harp.*' " ‡

The funeral elegy, which we have alluded to above, was one of the most important rites of ancient Caledonia, and no greater misfortune could occur to a hero than to have it omitted over his tomb; for without this sacred song,

* Book iv. vol. ii. p. 90. † Temora, b. vii.
‡ Dar-thula.

his soul could claim no admission into the airy halls of his fathers, but was condemned, until this ceremony was performed, to reside amidst the mist of the Lake of Lego. To the vapours of this lake were attributed the most noxious qualities, and many diseases, and even death itself, were supposed to be occasioned by their influence. Hither, however, every spirit hastened on its dismission from the body, and here waited the performance of that elegy which was to render accessible the mansions of the blest. In consequence of this idea of necessary though partial residence in the mist of Lego, it was deemed the office of the Spirit of the nearest relative to the departed warrior to collect its vapours over his grave.

"From the wood-skirted waters of Lego, ascend, at times, grey-bosomed mists; when the gates of the west are closed, on the sun's eagle eye. Wide, over Lara's stream, is poured the vapour dark and deep: the moon, like a dim shield, is swimming thro' its folds. With this, clothe the spirits of old their sudden gestures on the wind, when they stride, from blast to blast, along the dusky night. Often, blended with the gale, *to some warrior's grave they roll the mist, a grey dwelling to his ghost, until the songs arise.*" *

When sorrow and when suffering pressed hard upon the individual, when he was plunged into a state of misery from whence no hopes of extrication could be rationally entertained, and despair seized hold upon the mind, it was

* Temora, b. vii.

then the opinion of the ancient Scots that the spirit of the father of the sufferer *called his soul away*; a superstition which is credited among the common people of Scotland even to the present hour. Wild and singular as this conception may at first appear, there is something consolatory in the idea, and the following passage of Ossian places it in a pleasing and pathetic light.

"Spirit of departed Conmor! are thy steps on the bosom of winds? Comest thou, at times, to other lands, father of sad Sul-malla? Thou dost come! I have heard thy voice at night; while yet I rose on the wave to Erin of the streams. *The ghosts of Fathers, they say, call away the souls of their race, when they behold them lonely in the midst of woe.* Call me, my father, away, when Cathmor is low on the earth! Then shall Sul-malla be lonely in the midst of woe!" *

Another very romantic, yet soothing and delightful portion of the Celtic creed, consisted in believing that the spirits of their ancestors pursued and enjoyed, in their separate state, the employments and diversions they had been accustomed to in this life, and that they also frequented the hills of their country, and those scenes where they had spent the happiest period of their former existence. "*The children of youth,*" says Oscar, "*pursue deer formed of clouds, and bend their airy bow. They still love the sport of their youth; and mount the wind*

* Temora, b. iv.

with joy." * A common appellation for a spirit supposed to be in possession of felicity, is, "the ghost of the hills." "Bend thy fair head over the waves, thou lovelier than the ghost of the hills; when it moves, in a sun-beam, at noon, over the silence of Morven!" †

Ideas such as these, so admirably adapted to poetry, which unfold a system fertile in all that is beautiful and wild, could not escape the attention of succeeding bards; for though the works of Ossian, in their present form, were, until lately, unknown, and few moderns pretend to an acquaintance with the originals, yet the superstitious notices they convey have been immemorially known and familiar to the Highlands and Hebrides. In Thomson are many striking features of the Celtic mythology: the following exquisite stanza, for instance, alludes to the supposition of ghosts frequenting the scenes of their former life:

> As when a shepherd of the Hebrid-Isles,
> Plac'd far amid the melancholy main,
> (Whether it be lone fancy him beguiles,
> Or that aërial beings sometimes deign
> To stand, embodied, to our senses plain,)
> Sees on the naked hill, or valley low,
> The whilst in ocean Phœbus dips his wain,
> A vast assembly moving to and fro:
> Then all at once in air dissolves the wond'rous show. ‡

The singular yet pleasing tradition of the souls of the deceased pursuing the chase upon

* The War of Inis-Thona. † Fingal, b. i.
‡ Castle of Indolence, stanza 30.

their native hills, is no where described with more spirit and effect than in some noble lines quoted by Dr. Beattie, in his Essay on Poetry and Music, from a work now neglected and unknown.

E'er since of old the haughty Thanes of Ross
(So to the simple swain tradition tells)
Were wont, with clans and ready vassals throng'd,
To wake the bounding stag, or guilty wolf;
There oft is heard at midnight or at noon,
Beginning faint, but rising still more loud
And nearer, voice of hunters and of hounds,
And horns, hoarse-winded, blowing far and keen.
Forth-with the hubbub multiplies; the gale
Labours with wilder shrieks, and rifer din
Of hot pursuit; the broken cry of deer
Mangled by throttling dogs; the shouts of men,
And hoofs thick-beating on the hollow hill.
Sudden, the grazing heifer in the vale
Starts at the tumult, and the herdsman's ears
Tingle with inward dread. Aghast he eyes
The mountain's height, and all the ridges round;
Yet not one trace of living wight discerns:
Nor knows, o'eraw'd and trembling as he stands,
To what, or whom, he owes his idle fear,
To ghost, to witch, to fairy, or to fiend;
But wonders; and no end of wondering finds. *

In one of the Hebrides, called Icolmkill, there are near sixty, it is said, of the ancient Scottish, Irish, and Norwegian kings interred, and the people believe that frequently, during the night-time, these venerable monarchs appear, and in conformity to their former terres-

* Albania, a Poem: London, 1737.

trial employments, meet in council together. This striking superstition, Collins has thus recorded:

——————— Beneath the show'ry west,
The mighty kings of three fair realms are laid;
Once foes, perhaps, together now they rest,
No slaves revere them, and no wars invade:
Yet frequent now, at midnight's solemn hour,
The rifted mounds their yawning cells unfold,
And forth the monarchs stalk with sov'reign power,
In pageant robes, and wreath'd with sheeny gold,
And on their twilight tombs aërial council hold. *

It was a consoling idea to the Caledonian Celts, and which, I believe, is still retained among their descendants, that the souls of their deceased friends perpetually hovered around them, and sometimes, especially on the eve of any important undertaking, appeared looking on them with a benign aspect.

"Peace," exclaims Cuthullin, "to the souls of the heroes! their deeds were great in fight. Let them ride around me on clouds. Let them shew their features of wâr. My soul shall then be firm in danger; mine arm like the thunder of heaven! But be thou on a moon-beam, O Morna! near the window of my rest; when my thoughts are of peace; when the din of arms is past." †

As the Fingalians believed, that those who had conducted themselves with courage and

* Ode on the Popular Superstitions of the Highlands of Scotland, stanza 9.

† Fingal, b. i.

with virtue in this life were admitted to the airy halls of their fathers, but that the cowardly and the wicked were denied the society of heroes, and were condemned to wander *on all the winds of heaven*, so they naturally imagined that these unhappy spirits haunted scenes of ruin and desolation, or the abhorred circles of Loda, and frequently, by night, frightened and misled the lonely traveller. Such is the *Circle of Bruno*, alluded to in the epic poem of Temora, "where often," it is said, "the ghosts of the dead howled round the stone of * fear." Ossian, describing the warlike appearance of the chiefs of Erin, says, "Dreadful shone they to the light; like the fall of the stream of Bruno, when the meteor lights it, before the nightly stranger. Shuddering, he stops in his journey, and looks up for the beam of the morn!"† And when painting the majestic form of Cathmor, he represents him as rising "like the beam of the morning on a haunted heath: the traveller looks back, with bending eye, on the field of dreadful forms." ‡

Deer and dogs were conceived by the Celtæ to be endowed with the power of discerning the fleeting apparitions of the dead, and numerous allusions to this belief occur in the poems of Ossian. The latter also were thought to be sensible of the death of their master, though ever so distant from him, at the instant he receives the fatal stroke. Of the first of these

* Fingal, b. vi.
† Temora, b. ii.
‡ Temora, b. vi

superstitions, the following passage of the Caledonian is beautifully illustrative.

"Dost thou not behold, Malvina, a rock with its head of heath? Three aged pines bend from its face; green is the narrow plain at its feet; there the flower of the mountain grows, and shakes its white head in the breeze. The thistle is there alone, shedding its aged beard. Two stones, half sunk in the ground, shew their heads of moss. The deer of the mountain avoids the place, for *he beholds a dim ghost standing there.* The mighty lie, O Malvina, in the narrow plain of the rock." *

The second, relative to the equally wonderful discernment of the dog, is thus introduced in Fingal: "Trenar, graceful Trenar died, O maid of Inistore! *His grey dogs are howling at home; they see his passing ghost.*" †

Similar to the above were the ideas annexed to that part of the armour of the chief which was left at home in the halls of his fathers, for it was believed that the moment he fell in battle this became *bloody.* A prodigy so well calculated to awaken terror has been frequently made use of by Ossian, and with great effect. In Temora, Cul-allin thus understands that her son has fallen:

"The mother of Culmin remains in the hall. She looks forth on blue-rolling Strutha. A whirlwind rises on the stream, dark-eddying round the ghost of her son. His dogs are howling in their place. *His shield is bloody in*

* Carthon. † Fingal, b. 1.

the hall. ' Art thou fallen, my fair-haired son, in Erin's dismal war?' " * — Again in Conlath and Cuthona, Ossian exclaims upon the death of the hero:

" O ye bards of future times, remember the fall of Conlath with tears. He fell before his day. Sadness darkened in his hall. *His mother looked to his shield on the wall, and it was bloody. She knew that her hero fell.*"

It has already been remarked that the ancient Scots believed the elements were the residence of the spirits of the deceased; they carried the idea, however, still further, by supposing that storms, whirlwinds, and inundations were created by these potent aërial beings for the purpose of transporting themselves from place to place, or for the punishment or warning of nations, and even individuals. Ossian has, in a very picturesque passage, detailed this popular notion.

" The night was stormy. From their hills the groaning oaks came down. The sea darkly tumbled beneath the blast. The roaring waves climbed against our rocks. The lightning came often and shewed the blasted fern. Fercuth! *I saw the ghost who embroiled the night. Silent he stood on that bank. His robe of mist flew on the wind. I could behold his tears. An aged man he seemed, and full of thought.*" †

Thomson, too, in describing a tempest in his Winter, seems to have had his imagination warmed with similar ideas, for he has given a

* Temora, b. v. † Conlath and Cuthona.

kind of personification to the "savage blast," and has introduced a being whom he terms the *Demon of the night*. The lines, from their awful energy and beauty, merit quotation.

The whirling tempest raves along the plain;
And on the cottage thatch'd or lordly roof,
Keen-fastening, shakes them to the solid base.
Sleep frighted flies; and round the rocking dome,
For entrance eager, howls the savage blast.
Then too, they say, thro' all the burthen'd air,
Long groans are heard, shrill sounds, and distant sighs,
That, uttered by the demon of the night,
Warn the devoted wretch of woe and death.*

That a spirit also dwells in the waters, and directs their destructive fury, is an opinion coëval with the earliest records of tradition in Scotland, and still forms a part of the popular creed. The loud roaring of the mountain torrents swollen by the rains, so frequently excessive in a hilly country, and which, when thus reinforced, often sweep every object before them, was imagined to be the angry accents of the irritated spirit, which the vulgar termed the *Water-Wraith*, or *Kelpie*, or *Water-Fiend*. Home, in his excellent Tragedy of Douglas, has very happily interwoven this piece of superstition. The Peasant is delivering his story to Lady Randolph, and relates;

——————— Whilst thus we poorly liv'd,
One stormy night, as I remember well,

* Winter, line 186.

The wind and rain beat hard upon our roof,
Red came the river down, and loud and oft
*The angry spirit of the water shrick'd.**

In the supposed æra of Ossian, the souls of the deceased were believed sometimes to inhabit the waters; thus Connal, addressing the ghost of Crugal, inquires, "Shall we not hear thee in the storm? *in the noise of the mountain stream?*" †

The best and most extended description of the Water Fiend is to be found in the pages of Collins. This great master of the terrible and the pathetic has no where exerted himself with greater effect. —

Ah, luckless swain, o'er all unblest indeed!
Whom late bewilder'd in the dank dark fen,
Far from his flocks and smoking hamlet, then!
To that sad spot where hums the sedgy reed
On him enrag'd, the fiend, in angry mood,
Shall never look with pity's kind concern,
But, instant, furious, raise the whelming flood
O'er its drown'd bank, forbidding all return.
Or, if he meditate his wish'd escape
To some dim hill that seems uprising near,
To his faint eye the grim and grisly shape,
In all its terrors clad shall wild appear.
Meantime, the wat'ry surge shall round him rise,
Pour'd sudden forth from ev'ry swelling source.
What now remains but tears and hopeless sighs?
His fear-shook limbs have lost their youthful force,
And down the waves he floats, a pale and breathless corse.

* Act iii. scene 1. † Fingal, b. ii.

For him, in vain, his anxious wife shall wait,
Or wander forth to meet him on his way:
For him, in vain, at to-fall of the day,
His babes shall linger at th' unclosing gate.
Ah, ne'er shall he return! Alone, if night
Her travell'd limbs in broken slumbers steep,
With dropping willows drest, his mournful sprite
Shall visit sad, perchance, her silent sleep:
Then he, perhaps, with moist and watry hand,
Shall fondly seem to prop her shudd'ring cheek,
And with his blue-swoln face before her stand,
And shiv'ring cold, these piteous accents speak!
"Pursue, dear wife, thy daily toils pursue
"At dawn, or dusk, industrious as before;
"Nor e'er of me one hapless thought renew,
"While I lie welt'ring on the ozier'd shore,
"Drown'd by the Kelpie's wrath, nor e'er shall aid
thee more." *

The rocks and mountains were likewise conceived to be the habitation of superior beings. The echoing back of the voice from a rock was supposed to be occasioned by a spirit who resided within it, and which the common people called *The Son of the Rock*. This superstition is mentioned by Ossian in his poem, entitled *The Songs of Selma*. By the spirit of the mountain was understood that protracted, wild, and melancholy sound which, in a country such as the Highlands of Scotland, is generally predictive of a tempest. Ossian, describing the approach of a storm, says, "The wind was abroad, in the oaks; the spirit of the mountain roared." To this day the same credulity

* Ode on the Popular Superstitions, stanzas 7. and 8.

exists; and, as Mr. Gilpin observes, "the country people still consider the mountains of Bendoran (the highest inhabited parts of Scotland) as enchanted mountains; for before the storm begins to rage, they emit a hollow sound, which forebodes it. The shepherd knows it well, and instantly shelters his flock." * Thomson, in the true spirit of a poet, has availed himself of this popular notion:

Along the woods, along the moorish fens,
Sighs the sad *Genius* of the coming storm:
And up among the loose disjointed cliffs,
And fractur'd mountains wild, the brawling brook,
And cave, presageful, send a hollow moan
Resounding long in listening Fancy's ear. †

Many are the allusions in Ossian to what he has denominated *The Meteors of Death*, and which would appear to be illusive lights occurring in the night-time and esteemed of ill omen. One of the warriors in Fingal exclaims, "The ghosts of night shriek afar; *I have seen the meteors of death:*" and the terrific beauty of the following comparison is chiefly owing to the introduction of the same idea:

"Fingal, tall in his ship, stretched his bright lance before him. Terrible was the gleam of his steel; it was like *the green meteor of death, setting in the heath of Malmor, when the traveller is alone, and the broad moon is darkened in heaven.*" ‡

* Scotch Tour, vol. i. p. 174.
† Winter, l. 66.
‡ Fingal, b. iii.

In the admirable composition, called *The Five Bards*, appended to the Croma of Ossian, is another striking instance:

"*The meteor, token of death!* flies sparkling through the gloom. It rests on the hill. I see the withered fern, the dark-browed rock, the fallen oak. Who is that in his shrowd beneath the tree, by the stream?"

Of the prodigies which occur in the productions ascribed to Ossian, the following is perhaps the most impressive and important. Fingal and his chiefs are represented as rejoicing in the hall of Selma.—

"The night passed away in song; morning returned in joy. The mountains shewed their grey heads; the blue face of ocean smiled. The white wave is seen tumbling round the distant rock; a mist rose, slowly, from the lake. It came, in the figure of an aged man, along the silent plain. Its large limbs did not move in steps; for a ghost supported it in mid-air. *It came towards Selma's hall, and dissolved in a shower of blood.*

"The king alone beheld the sight; he foresaw the death of the people. He came, in silence, to his hall, and took his father's spear. The mail rattled on his breast. The heroes rose around. They looked, in silence, on each other, marking the eyes of Fingal. They saw battle in his face; the death of armies on his spear." *

Such, if we can trust to the fidelity with

* Carthon.

which these popular traditions have been transmitted to us, are the chief features of that superstition which prevailed for many centuries in the mountainous districts of Scotland.

It will immediately strike every reader as a most singular circumstance, that no omnipotent, no superintending Deity, nor any worship, or mode of supplication, should be admitted into the Celtic system *; this Mr. Macpherson accounts for from Fingal's rejection of the Druidic rites, and his ignorance of Christianity: but it is more probable, I think, as Mr. Macpherson himself has hinted in one part of his Dissertation, that it was owing to the opinion of the bards, that any assistance given to their heroes in battle was highly derogatory to their fame, and would transfer the glory of the action to the god who interfered. The inhabitants of Morven, however, as we have already seen, believed in a separate state, as a necessary event, and imagined that the valiant, the merciful, and the wise, enjoyed their earthly pursuits in the region of the clouds, and in the halls appropriated to their heroes, and that they frequently visited their native hills and their former friends, to whom they were propitious and lovely in their appearance, whilst the cowardly and the vicious were the sport of all the winds of heaven, appeared only in marshy

* Hence, the term *religion*, as applied to the Celtic superstitions, cannot be perfectly correct, there being in no part of Ossian, if we except the engagement with the spirit of Loda, any reference to or transaction with beings of an order superior to those which were supposed to inhabit the elements.

valleys, and amid scenes of gloom and desolation, were full of ill omen to those who saw them, and of terrible and ghastly form. The different elements were likewise esteemed the habitation of spirits who possessed powers of an extensive nature, and were the objects of admiration or dread to the wandering Celts.

Imperfect as this system may appear, it would and did lead to a state of manners highly mild and generous. While the Goth, in worshipping a Deity who delighted in blood and slaughter, became ferocious, unrelenting, and savage, the Caledonian, believing that mercy was the attribute of true valour, and that to spare the fallen and the weak, to protect and to love his friends, to open his halls to the stranger, and to bid the frequent song arise, were the best titles to future happiness, would naturally prove the brave, the noble, yet gentle being he is represented in the works of Ossian.

Wild, generous, and romantic as their superstitions, were, therefore, their genius and manners; from the former, when known to prevail in any country, the latter must necessarily be deduced, and when these are found to be generally mingled with a deep yet pleasing melancholy, the nature of the country and the progress of society may be almost accurately ascertained.

If the superstitions introduced into the poems of Ossian be taken from remote tradition, (and, I believe, from all the evidence that has hitherto been discovered, they really are,) Mr. Macpherson was compelled to render the manners

of his heroes accordant, in fact, to render them, though ignorant of arts and sciences, brave, generous, credulous, attentive, and even delicate in their attentions to their women, delighting in music, and addicted, from the face of the country they inhabited, and the nature of their elementary creed, to melancholy enthusiasm.

This collection of and these observations on the singular superstitions of the Highlands of Scotland will, I should hope, afford amusement to the inquisitive reader, and may, probably, suggest no unimportant reflections. *

* The evidence in favour of the authenticity of the Poems of Ossian seems to be on the increase; the elaborate Essay of Dr. Graham, published in 1807, in an octavo volume, and the Dissertations of Sir John Sinclair and Dr. Macarthur, accompanying the supposed originals, having brought forward some very striking testimony on this side of the question. Perhaps it may ultimately be discovered, that Mr. Macpherson has performed the same kind offices for the Celtic bard which were so happily executed ages ago by Lycurgus and Pisistratus for the Grecian poet.

No. XXXII.

Oh! come, my Fair-one; I have thatch'd above
And whiten'd all around my little cot,'
I've shorn the hedges leading to the grove,
Nor is the seat and willow bower forgot.

DOWNMAN.

DURING the latter end of the summer of—— I made an excursion to the lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland, and, fond of the wild and daring features of nature, I here met all that could gratify the eye of the painter, or the imagination of the poet. Many, too, were the scenes whose exquisite beauty and softness, whose charm of contrast and calm sweetness of expression, suggested the delightful, but, too often, visionary ideas of rural happiness and elegant simplicity.

Whilst thus employed, my mind teeming with each romantic thought which the country around me, a peculiar cast of study, which youth and inexperience had planted there, an incident occurred, that even now, when time hath almost paled the vivid colouring of fancy, I recollect not but with renovated enthusiasm.

The red rays of the sun gleamed strong on the heights of Helvellyn, as I passed by its foot, on my road to Ambleside, and evening, with all her lovely tints, had stolen upon me by the time I reached the chapel of Wibourn. Oppressed by the heat of the day, the coolness of the present hour became remarkably refreshing, and, riding gently on, I arrived at the margin of Grasmere water. Nothing can exceed the beauty of this charming lake, diffused amid the bosom of the mountains; its banks exhibit the utmost variety of rock and turf, and are scooped into a number of little bays; while on a promontory which rushes far into the water, and at an inconsiderable height above the surface, stands the village of Grasmere, its parish church rising conspicuous in the centre. A large quantity of fine old wood clothes the sides of the mountain, and here and there a cottage is discovered embosomed in the foliage. The verdure of the meadows, the grouping of the cattle, and the hanging shrubs which climb along the rugged projections of the crag, still further heighten this delicious paradise. I walked for some time along the borders of the lake, wrapt in the contemplation of beauties to which even the pencil of Ruisdale could not do justice. The sombre shades of evening were now fast approaching, the setting sun smiled with a farewell lustre on the summits of the hills, and the water, still as death, received a deep gloom from the lengthening shadows of the mountains; I sat myself down upon the roots of an old tree near the edge of the lake, and

was listening to the distant murmur of some water-falls, when suddenly the sound of village bells diverted my attention; — no, never shall I forget their sweet and dying cadence, how softly they stole along the lake, now bursting loud and louder on the ear, and now faintly sinking to repose; they were in unison with the scene around, and with my feelings: — no, never shall I forget them.

> ——— Wherever I have heard
> A kindred melody, the scene recurs,
> And with it all its pleasures. ——
>
> COWPER.

The night closed in ere I could tear myself away from this bewitching scenery, and my desire of once more enjoying it was so great, that I determined to sleep within the village, and postpone for a day any farther progress towards Ambleside. The succeeding morning was excessively hot, but, as the evening began to approach, Nature again assumed her mellow colouring, and again the same delightful coolness regaled my languid senses. I traversed the edge of the water, and, having dwelt upon the scenes I had viewed with so much pleasure the night before, I entered the wood, which, climbing half way up the mountain's side, faces the village. The path ran in an oblique direction, gently winding up the hill; it was soft as moss, and of a vivid green, and through many little openings in the wood, the crags, the village, and the lake, were seen to great advantage.

I had not proceeded far, before a neat cottage, built on a little level, on the side of the hill, attracted my notice. There was an air of taste and simplicity in every thing around it, which highly excited my curiosity in regard to the inhabitants, of whom, from the scene before me, I conceived something extraordinary. It was placed in that situation, which, of all others, is the most picturesque, that is, its point of elevation was not too great for the landscape. From the bottom of a small lawn which spread before it, the wood gradually fell to the margin of the water, and a number of gigantic oaks covered the hill behind it nearly to the summit; a broken line of moss-hung crag, however, still peeping beyond. Against the front of this cottage grew an old woodbine, whose branches, mingling with each other, crept round four neat sashed windows that glowed as fire from the reflection of the sun. While I stood silently admiring the beauty of the scene, the door of the cottage was opened, and a young woman, clothed with elegant but artless taste, stepped out upon the green; on her arm there leant a man of a very interesting figure, and rather stricken in years, and who, after looking around him with an air of satisfaction, smiled with ineffable sweetness on his fair companion.

The landscape, however diversified, however picturesque, is, unless animated by human figures, far from complete. The mind is soon satisfied with the view of rock, of wood and water: but if the peasant, the shepherd, or the

fisherman be seen; or if, still more engaging, a group of figures be thrown into some important action; the heart as well as the imagination is affected, and a new sensation of exquisite delight, and scarce admitting of satiety, fills and dilates the bosom. Thus was I situated; and thus, having gratified my fancy with the scenery around, was about to return to the village: but no sooner did the two figures, I have just mentioned, appear before me, than my best and sweetest feelings were instantly occupied; the country assumed a more enchanting hue, the sun shed a mellower and more delicious tint, and every object seemed heightened with a pathetic grace; and surely no incident could, better than the present one, have produced the effect; for an intelligence the most expressive sate on the features of the young woman; an intelligence so divine, so mild, so graceful, that Guido Rheni might have studied it with rapture. She had on a gown of white cotton, and round her waist there was a green sash; her hair, of a dark brown, hung down upon her shoulders, and from her left arm depended a small basket. The person who leaned upon her right was dressed in a scarlet coat, which seemed to have been formerly an uniform; his countenance was strongly marked, martial, but at the same time mingled with much benignity; his forehead was bold and open, his eye full and dark, his eye-brows black and thick, his nose aquiline, and his chin rather prominent; he had a staff in his right hand, and although

apparently possessing some vigour, and in health, he walked with difficulty, being, as I perceived, lame of one leg.

I had remained, until now, concealed beneath the shadow of some trees, but stepping forward to continue the objects of my admiration in view, a favourite dog, who ran by their side, caught a sight of me, and beginning to bark with vehemence, they turned round. I found myself discovered, and, advancing towards them, begged they would pardon my intrusion, for that, invited by the beauty of the scene, I had inadvertently wandered into their grounds. They smiled at my apology, and the old gentleman, with much good nature, told me I was welcome to his farm; that it gave him pleasure to perceive I admired his situation, and that, provided I could bear to travel no faster than himself, he would shew me some parts well worth seeing, and which, probably from my ignorance of the country, had escaped me. I thanked him, and willingly accepting of his proposal, we took another direction, returning to the cottage by a path which was altogether hid from common observation. An agreeable conversation soon took place, into which our fair companion occasionally entered with the most frank and amiable simplicity, and speedily convinced me that her heart and her understanding were as lovely as her form. As we became more and more pleased with each other, the reserve, natural to strangers, wore off, and having expressed much satisfaction, mingled with some curiosity, in regard to their mode of

life, the old man told me, he had formerly served as a British officer in Germany, that his name was Felton, and that having lived long in the army without due promotion, and being very much wounded in his last engagement, and indeed rendreed incapable of further service, he had retired with his wife and daughter, the young lady now present, to a little estate which he possessed in the West-Riding of Yorkshire; that after residing a few happy years in that situation, he lost his wife, and, unable any longer to endure the sight of objects which perpetually recalled her to his memory, he had left it for this romantic spot, where, blest with the dutiful and affectionate attention of his lovely Agnes, nothing on this side of the grave, he thought, could add to his content. As he said this, he turned towards his daughter, whose blue eyes, suffused with tears, beamed the most lively gratitude. I felt at this moment one of the sweetest transports my breast has ever known: I felt how much all sublunary bliss rests on the warmth of social feeling; and gazing on the tender features of Miss Felton, the tear that trickled down my cheek gave tribute to her goodness.

We had by this time reached the cottage, having in our short tour seen several little elegant and striking views, the fore-ground of which, as sequestered and lying near the cot, had been greatly improved by the genius of Felton. I would now have taken my leave, for the sun was near the horizon, but Felton begged I would step in, and, as he expressed

it, grace his humble shed. I could not refuse: there was an air of gentleness and sincerity about him that would not admit of a refusal: so I stepped in to a very neat little parlour where, sitting down, the good old man desired his daughter to bring some of her best wine. "If you can excuse," he said, "what an old soldier can afford, you are welcome: Heaven has not given me affluence, Sir, but it has blessed me with what I value more, a lot above dependence, and a heart that is grateful for the gift." I was much affected, and, without saying a word, involuntarily stretched out my hand; he placed his in mine; we were silent: Miss Felton entered, she smiled; and throwing her blue eyes with a bewitching sweetness upon me, offered the wine; I took a glass; my hand trembled; I drank her health; it was, I thought, the most delightful wine I had ever tasted; I praised her skill; she blushed. "I am glad it pleases you," she said. At this moment, turning round to speak to her father, the bright hilt of a sword, which hung across the chimney-piece, caught my attention. Felton observed it, and rising from his chair, took it down; he drew it from the scabbard: "This," cried he, waving it round his head, "this, Sir, was once my only fortune, my only friend; with this, (and much good service has it done me,) with this I've known the day when, shrinking from the lightning of its edge, the foes of Felton have retired." As he spoke this, a transient light flashed from his eyes, but pausing awhile, an expression mild and pensive succeed-

ed: "Those days," resuming his discourse, "are past, nor do I wish them to return; turbulent they were, and marked with blood; war was never my enjoyment I never did delight in devastation; the tears of the mournful were ever bitter to my soul." He sighed, and sheathing his sword, placed it in its former situation. "No," he continued, "though ever ready, and with a willing heart, to serve my country, yet never did I taste the sweets of happiness, till having sought retirement, I indulged the pleasures of domestic life. Here, with my Agnes and a few friends, every wish is gratified. I here possess, and I am thankful for it, my share of human bliss."

During this little speech Miss Felton sate near a table, her head reclined upon her hand, her eyes were fixed upon her father, they were full of tears, tears of grateful rapture. Sure, thought I, if content did ever visit the abode of man, her residence is here, where virtue, and where feeling hearts, where peace and competence, combine. Ah, never, in the warmest sally of my imagination, never did I fancy aught so beauteous as this spot of ground, or aught so lovely as its gentle tenants. How to take leave of them I knew not; the sun had already set, and the moment of separation drew near, of a separation perhaps eternal. I rose, I kissed the white hand of Miss Felton; and, embracing her father, hurried out of the room, without being able to utter a single word: the night was fine, the moon had risen, and sweetly illumined the lake and distant mountains: all,

except the nightingale, was mute; and struck by a scene so accordant with my feelings, it was late ere I reached the village, where, giving way to a strain of pensive enthusiasm, I wrote, before I went to rest, the following stanzas:

I go; farewell, my beauteous maid!
I leave the land belov'd for thee,
From Grasmere's hills afar convey'd,
From all that whisper'd joy to me.

Though dear the little native vale
To which I turn my lingering feet,
Though dear the friends who in that dale
Expect their much-lov'd son to greet:

Yet will they hear the deep-drawn sigh,
As shuns his couch the traitor sleep;
Yet will they view his languid eye,
And o'er the love-lorn mourner weep.

Oh, had ye known the gentle maid,
How soft her accent, mild her air,
How sweet her dark-brown ringlets play'd,
And trembled on her bosom fair;

Ye would not, O my friends, admire,
Why seeks your son the walk by stealth,
Why beats his pulse with fev'rish fire,
Why fades the purple glow of health.

And must I leave thee, must we part?
Ah, ruthless fortune bids to fly,
Nor heeds the pang that swells my heart,
Nor marks the tear-o'erflowing eye!

Yet Hope shall soothe the bosom care,
Shall fondly prompt the tender sigh,
Shall smiling wave her golden hair *,
And roll her blue voluptuous eye.

Perchance when time hath stol'n away
A few dull years of toil and pain;
Ah, then, perchance, may beam a day
To guide me to my love again.

ODE TO CONTENT.

Non ego divitias patrum, fructusque requiro,
Quos tulit antiquo condita messis avo.
Parva seges satis est; satis est requiescere tecto,
Si licet, et solito membra levare toro.

TIBULLUS.

To thee, mild source of home-felt joy!
To thee I vow this artless lay;
For, Nymph divine! no cares alloy,
No griefs pollute thy halcyon day.

Though soft the moon her mellow light
O'er yonder mould'ring tow'r hath shed,
Though soft as sleeps her beam on night,
Yet softer sleeps thy peaceful head.

For thee, the fairy sprite of morn,
Her sweet, her varied dream shall weave;
For thee, thy wood-girt thatch adorn
The calm, the golden lights of eve;

* And Hope enchanted smil'd, and wav'd her golden hair.

COLLINS.

For thee, the cool stream murm'ring flow,
The green, the winding vale along;
For thee, where yonder wild pines grow,
The Maiden breathe her village song.

When wilt thou haunt my straw-rooft cot,
When wilt thou bless my longing arms;
When shall I claim thy lowly lot,
When shall I share thy modest charms?

I ne'er will ask of purple Pride,
Her gems that idly fire the night,
The gems that o'er her tresses wide
In lustre fling their garish light:

Nor will I ask of Pow'r to whirl,
In terror cloth'd, the scythed car,
And, mad with fury, shout to hurl
The dark, the death-fraught spear of war.

Then come, my little dwelling share,
A dwelling blest, if shar'd with thee,
From the proud far, from pining care,
From guilt and pale-ey'd sorrow free.

Ah! let the Great, by error led,
To many a gorgeous city fly,
More blest with thee to eat my bread
In peace and humble privacy.

More blest to rove the heath along,
At grey-clad eve, from labour won,
To list the wood-lark's plaintive song,
And wistful watch the setting sun.

More blest by oak that, cleft and lone,
Flings o'er the stream his moss-hung bough,
As swells the blast in rougher tone,
To mark the wild wave dash below.

More blest nigh yonder darkling dell,
Where sleeps the Bard by Fame forgot,
Of many a love-lorn grief to tell,
And mourn till morn his cheerless lot.

But oh far happier if at night,
As onward rolls the sadd'ning storm,
I meet thy blue eye's glist'ning light,
I press thy gently-yielding form.

Sweet as the first-drawn sigh of love,
Content, thou mild, thou meek-ey'd Maid!
Above bright pow'r, gay wealth above,
To thee my willing vows be paid.

No. XXXIII.

——————— "Ah!" long immur'd
In noon-tide darkness by the glimm'ring lamp,
Each muse and each fair science pin'd away
The sordid hours: while foul, barbarian hands
Their mysteries profan'd, unstrung the lyre,
And chain'd the soaring pinion down to earth.

AKENSIDE.

THE destruction of the Alexandrian Library by Amrou in the year 640, has been a theme of perpetual regret to the literati of every succeeding age and nation. In this barbarous and wanton conflagration, it has been supposed that many of the first authors of antiquity have perished, and that, in fact, the greater part of the learning of the ancient world was, in consequence of this event, for ever buried in oblivion. Some writers, however, and those, too, of great respectability, have ventured to disbelieve the accounts given us of this licentious act of power, and assert that the sentence of Omar is repugnant to the law of Mahomed, which expressly injoins that the religious books of the Jews and Christians, acquired by the right of war, should never be destroyed; and that the productions of profane science, history, poetry,

philosophy, &c. may be lawfully made use of for the benefit of the faithful. Abulpharagius, from whose Dynasties this relation of the burning of the Alexandrian Library is taken, lived six hundred years after the event, whilst annalists of a much earlier date, Christians and natives of Egypt, have been perfectly silent on the subject. One of these, the patriarch Eutychius, has given a copious and accurate description of the conquest of Alexandria, without mentioning a single circumstance relative to the loss of the library. Renaudot and the celebrated Gibbon consider the account of Abulpharagius as a mere fiction: "the tale has been repeatedly transcribed," says the latter, "and every scholar, with pious indignation, has deplored the irreparable shipwreck of the learning, the arts, and the genius of antiquity. For my own part, I am strongly tempted to deny both the fact and the consequences." *

* Saint Croix has lately published his learned researches on the Libraries of Alexandria; the destruction of which, by order of Omar, he pronounces to be a mere fable, first invented by Abulpharagius, who wrote 600 years after the event. The oldest and most considerable libraries at Alexandria did not exist farther back than the fourth century. We may therefore compare the story of the books serving to heat the baths six months with that of Rotheddins; who tells us, that, at the taking of Bagdad by Hulagon, the destroyer of the empire of the caliphs, the Tartars threw into the Euphrates the books of the colleges of that city; which were so numerous, that they formed a bridge for the foot and horse to pass over, and gave the water a black colour.

The collection of books made at different periods at Alexandria underwent different fates. That which was formed by Ptolemy Soter, in the Museum in the Bruchion, and burnt in Julius Cæsar's time, contained, according to Orosius, only

What tends strongly to prove that the destruction of these volumes by fire did not take place, is the vast treasure of antiquity yet remaining with us. To ascertain, however, the truth or falsehood of this relation, and also what we have suffered through the depredations of time, ignorance, and bigotry, and what quantity of ancient literature we still enjoy, it will be necessary to appeal to some celebrated Critic, who lived at a period when Grecian and Roman literature were yet entire. Happily, in the person of QUINTILIAN we find a sure and almost unerring guide; I have no hesitation, indeed, in pronouncing him the first critic of antiquity. He has commented upon, and in a style exquisitely adapted to the subject, all the first writers of Greece and Rome. "I have often perused with pleasure," says Gibbon, "a chapter of Quintilian (Instit. Orator. lib. x. cap. i.) in which that judicious critic enumerates and appreciates the series of Greek and Latin classics."* By comparing therefore what now remains to us of ancient literature with what existed in the age of Quintilian, we shall be able accurately to unfold our losses, and to ascertain our wealth.

40,000 books; and Gellius, Ammianus Marcellinus, and Isidorus, reckon but 70,000 in all Alexandria, including 3000 in the Serapion. One that succeeded this in the Museum, was destroyed under Aurelian; and what remained in the Serapion was so plundered, in the overthrow of idolatry under the patriot Theophilus, in 390, that Orosius saw only empty presses. — *Gentleman's Magazine, May*, 1800.

* Roman Empire, vol. ix. p. 442. note.

Quintilian flourished at a period when all the first-rate authors of Greece and Rome, with the exception of Tacitus, Pliny, and Juvenal, had acquired, by the sober verdict of Time, unperishable glory; and it may not be useless, or uninteresting, previous to our entering upon the direct subject of these papers, to present the reader with a short sketch of the life of this ingenious critic.

Quintilian was born at Calagurris in Spain, but neither the period of his birth, nor of his death, can, with any certainty, be fixed. Galba, it is said, first brought him to Rome, where he taught rhetoric, with great reputation, for better than twenty years, and frequently pleaded at the bar with a success that conferred on him much applause. He was preceptor to Pliny the Younger, and many other literary characters; and Domitian entertained so high an opinion of his abilities, that he appointed him tutor to the two princes whom he had destined to the imperial purple. Disgusted, however, with the splendour and vices of a court, and the turbulence and tumults of the capital, he obtained permission of the Emperor to enjoy the residue of his life in retirement. In this rural seclusion he composed his *Institutiones Oratoriæ*, and his treatise *De Causis Corruptæ Eloquentiæ* *, productions which have immor-

* "Who the author of this deservedly admired Dialogue was," observes Mr. Malone, "has long since been a question among the learned. Beside Quintilian, it has been attributed to Suetonius, and to Tacitus; and Mr. Melmoth, the elegant translator of this piece, is decidedly of opinion that it was not

talized his name, and been of essential service to the cause of literature. He is termed by Warton "one of the most rational and elegant of Roman writers;" and he justly observes, "no author ever adorned a scientifical treatise with so many beautiful metaphors." * The misfortunes, however, incident to humanity, and which assail the roof of the philosopher with as much facility as the dome of regal splendour, embittered the latter days of Quintilian. In the introduction to the sixth book of the Institutions, he laments in the most pathetic manner the death of his wife and of his two sons, with whom he had enjoyed the purest harmony and domestic felicity. Solitary, and, as it is said, in a state of indigence,

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the production of any one of those celebrated writers. It was, however, undoubtedly written by Tacitus; as is proved decisively by a slight circumstance, not noticed by any of the ancient critics, and first pointed out by my learned friend Dr. Joseph Stock, formerly fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, in his excellent edition of Tacitus, in four volumes, octavo, 1788. This proof is derived from the following passages in the Dialogue on Oratory, compared with one of Pliny's Epistles. In the ninth section of the Dialogue, we find these words:

"'Adjice, quòd *poetis*, si modò dignum aliquid elaborare et effingere velint, relinquenda conversatio amicorum, et jucunditas urbis, deserenda cætera ollicin, atque, ut ipsi dicunt, *in nemora et lucos*, id est, in solitudinem recedendum est.'

"Again, in sect. 12.

"'Nemora verò et luci, et secretum iter, quod Aper increpabat, tantam mihi attulerunt voluptatem, ut inter præcipuos carminum fructos enumerem.'

"Pliny (Epist. lib. 9. ep. 10.), in a letter to TACITUS, evidently referring to the foregoing passages, thus addresses him:

"'Itaque *poemata* quiescunt, quæ tu inter nemora et lucos, commodissimè perfici putas.'"

MALONE's *Dryden*, vol. i. part ii. p. 230.

* Essay on Pope, vol. i. p. 177.

he bitterly felt his deprivations, and has certainly indulged his sorrow to excess when he accuses the designs and the existence of a providence. The Institutions of Quintilian lay buried in oblivion for many centuries *; and it is the common opinion that they were not discovered until the year 1415, when Poggio Bracciolini found them in an old tower of the Monastery of St. Gall; but Petrarch affirms that in 1350 he had the good fortune to find in Arezzo, his native town, the Institutions of this author, which till then he could never meet with. The manuscript was mutilated and in a bad condition, but it was an interesting discovery to him, and he wrote some lines to Quintilian to express his joy. † Good editions of this critic have been published by Gibson, Burmannus, Rollin, and Henry Homer. ‡

* Since this was written, I have found reason to think, from some notices in Warton's Dissertation on the Introduction of Learning into England, that manuscripts of Quintilian existed during the dark and middle ages, and were at no period extinct. In the year 855, Lupus, abbot of Ferrieres in France, sent two of his monks to Pope Benedict the third, to beg a copy of Cicero de Oratore, and *Quintilian's Institutes*, and some other books: "for," says the abbot, "although we have part of those books, yet there is no whole or complete copy of them in all France." Mr. Warton proceeds to observe, that very early manuscripts of Quintilian's Institutes are extant, and that he appears to have been a favourite author with some writers of the middle ages. He is quoted by John of Salisbury, a writer of the eleventh century, and by Vincent of Beauvais, a writer of the thirteenth. The very copy of Quintilian, found by Poggio, is said to have been in Lord Sunderland's noble library now at Blenheim.

Warton's *History of English Poetry*, vol. i.

† Dobson's Life of Petrarch, vol. ii. p. 47.

‡ I have occasionally noticed the best editions of my authors with a view of being useful to the junior student.

It will be the purport of the remainder of this paper, and of the ensuing ones, to enumerate the authors selected by the Rhetorician, and which he has arranged under the heads of poetry, history, oratory, and philosophy, and to ascertain what is left, and what is lost of each author. After having gone through the series of Grecian writers, I shall throw the whole into a tabular form, which will render the result still clearer: a similar plan will be pursued with the Roman writers. To prevent however the dryness of a catalogue, I shall intersperse illustrations, quotations, and criticisms, which, I trust, will alleviate the barrenness of the prospect, and render our progress at once easy and delightful.

Quintilian has, with great propriety, commenced his series of celebrated authors with the mighty name of HOMER. As one of the best specimens of the composition of our acute and elegant critic, I shall quote the first paragraph of his eulogium on this immortal poet, to which I shall annex a translation; a faint attempt to supply the unlearned reader with an idea of the manner and style of the ingenious Roman, whom to translate throughout with energy, spirit, and fidelity, would prove a task of the most arduous and difficult kind; such is the beauty of his diction, and such the peculiar propriety of his epithets. As no version, however, at all adequate to the merits of the original exists in English, I shall be under the necessity of affixing one of my own to this and all the succeeding quotations.

" Ut Aratus ab Jove incipiendum putat, ita nos ritè cœpturi ab HOMERO videmur. Hic enim (quemadmodum ex Oceano dicit ipse amnium vim fontiumque cursus initium capere) omnibus eloquentiæ partibus exemplum et ortum dedit. Hunc nemo in magnis sublimitate, in parvis proprietate superaverit. Idem lætus ac pressus, jucundus et gravis, tum copia, tum brevitatè mirabilis; nec poeticâ modò, sed oratoria virtute eminentissimus."

" As Aratus, in his astronomical poem, thought it necessary to commence with Jove, so with peculiar propriety may we take our commencement from HOMER. For as the ocean, to adopt a beautiful passage of this great poet, has given origin to every stream and every fountain, so has Homer likewise given birth to, and a specimen of, every species of eloquence. Him no one on lofty subjects hath exceeded in sublimity, and on topics of an humbler theme him no one in propriety. He is at once elegant and nervous, delightful and profound; in diffusion or in brevity equally admirable, and excelling not more in poetical than in oratorial merit."

Of Homer, fortunately, the principal productions have descended entire to posterity. The Iliad and the Odyssey, through the attention of Lycurgus and Pisistratus, still remain accurately arranged, and in the highest preservation. Some pieces, however, attributed to Homer are lost, namely, the *Margites*, the *Ilias Minor*, the *Cypriacs*, and a few hymns. The first of these, on the authority of Aristotle, we may

confidently assert to have been written by the poet; the rest are of doubtful origin. Of the hymns, a few remain, and one or two have, more than once, been translated into English verse. Mr. Hole, the poet of Arthur, has given the public a beautiful version of one of these, addressed, if I recollect aright, to Ceres.

Notwithstanding the splendid abilities and genius of Homer, an encomium upon which would be altogether superfluous either in this or any other place, he had many detractors. *Sagaris*, *Zoïlus*, and *Parthenius* have, by their envy and calumny, rendered themselvee infamous to all posterity. On the latter there is a spirited epigram in the Greek Anthologia by *Erycius*, and with equal spirit has it been thus translated by Mr. Hayley.

Here, though deep buried he can rail no more,
Pour burning pitch, on base Parthenius pour;
Who on the sacred Muses dar'd to spirt
His frothy venom and poetic dirt:
Who said of Homer, in his frantic scorn,
The Odyssey was mud, the Iliad thorn:
For this, dark Furies, in your snakes enroll,
And thro' Cocytus drag the sland'rous soul.

A valuable edition of this poet may shortly be expected from the taste and erudition of Heyne.*

A considerable portion of the works of Hesiod yet exists. His poem on Agriculture,

* This has since appeared, and is equal to the expectations which had been formed concerning it.

called *Works and Days*, and his *Theogony*, or *Genealogy of the Gods*, are spared to our curiosity: a fragment, too, entitled the *Shield of Hercules*, part perhaps of a poem now lost, and which was termed the *Heroic Genealogy*, is also preserved, and has lately been admirably translated in the *Exeter Essays*. The most popular production however of Hesiod, his poem in praise of illustrious women, is no more; this, from the opening words Ἠ Οἵη, was known in course of time by the name *Eoics*, or the *Great Eoics*, and is recorded to have been a wonderful favorite with the ladies of Greece. Such indeed was the popularity of our bard, that he is reported to have gained the prize though Homer started as his competitor! Of the poet of Ascra we have no good translation.* Cook was not competent to the task; and should a man of indisputable taste and genius undertake a version, it is still very doubtful, owing to the sterile nature of these poems, whether he would find himself sufficiently rewarded.†

ANTIMACHUS of Claros, near Colophon, esteemed one of the six famous poets of ancient Greece, has received no mercy from the hand of Time. Of his numerous and voluminous effusions, not one has escaped. We may be consoled however in recollecting that Quinti-

* A translation, however, from the pen of Charles Abraham Elton, Esq. has lately supplied this *deliration*, and in a manner which reflects great credit on his taste and erudition.

† An excellent edition of this poet was printed by Bodini at Parma, in quarto, in 1785.

lian, though he gives him praise for energy and strength, and for no common eloquence, declares he was altogether void of pathos, and that he possessed neither suavity of manner, nor art, nor design in the conduct of his fable. This last observation is strongly corroborated by the well-known anecdote that in his great work, the *Thebaid*, he had exhausted twenty-four books before he brought the seven chiefs to the siege. Such indeed was the vast prolixity of his pieces that his audiences usually deserted him, and on an occasion of this kind, when all had left him except Plato, he exclaimed, " Legam nihilominus, Plato enim mihi est unus instar omnium." " I shall nevertheless read on, for to me Plato is an entire audience." Antimachus composed a poem to the memory of his wife or mistress, under the title of Lyde, and which, most probably, obtained much celebrity, as Ovid alludes to it in the following line:

Nec tantum Clario Lyde dilecta poëtæ.

More lov'd than Lyde by the Clarian Bard.

In a fragment of a love-poem written by Hermesianax of Colophon, and preserved in Athenæus, there is a pleasing compliment to our unfortunate poet, and which, as time has done him so much injury, I am the more willing to introduce.

Antimachus with tender art
Pour'd forth the sorrows of his heart:
In her Dardanian grave he laid
Chryseïs his beloved maid;

And thence returning sad beside
Pactolus' melancholy tide,
To Colophon the minstrel came,
Still sighing forth the mournful name,
Till lenient time his grief appeas'd,
And tears by long indulgence ceas'd.

CUMBERLAND.

PANYASIS has shared a similar fate, for no portion of his labours has reached posterity. He was classed among the first masters of epic poetry, but, if the opinion of Quintilian be just, he seldom rose beyond mediocrity.

" Panyasin," says he, " ex utroque mistum putant, in eloquendo neutrius æquare virtutes; alterum tamen ab eo materia, alterum disponendi ratione superari."

" Panyasis is supposed to display a mixture of both these authors, (viz. Hesiod and Antimachus,) though inferior in point of eloquence to either. Yet has he excelled the one in the choice of subject, and the other in felicity of arrangement."

An ample specimen of the poetry of APOLLONIUS RHODIUS has been preserved, and which has exercised the varying judgment of the critics. Many have condemned him to mediocrity, and among the number appear the formidable names of Quintilian and Longinus; but there is an appeal from the decision of the most celebrated critic, and he who shall attentively peruse the four books on the Argonautic expedition, will find his heart powerfully affected, and his tenderest feelings called forth. Virgil, whose taste was exquisite, felt the full

force and beauty of his genius, and has transferred many of his most pathetic passages into the episode of Dido; a tribute to merit which more than balances the strictures of the cold-blooded critic.

Tho' Nature feel his verse, tho' she declare
Medea's magic is still potent there,
Yet Fancy sees the slighted Poet rove
In pensive anger thro' th' Elysian grove.
From Critic shades, whose supercilious pride
His song neglected, or his powers decried,
He turns indignant — unopprest by fears,
Behold, he seeks the sentence of his Peers.
See their just band his honest claim allow,
See pleasure lighten on his laurell'd brow;
He soars the Critic's cold contempt above,
For VIRGIL greets him with fraternal love.

HAYLEY.

No good translation has yet enabled the English reader to appreciate the excellencies of this poet, for neither Fawkes nor Green can be said to have done due justice to their original. *

Of the productions of ARATUS, a Greek poet, physician, and astronomer, the *Phænomena*, an astronomical heroic poem, has reached our times. This poem was a great favourite at Rome, and Cicero, when young, translated the whole of it: a few fragments of this version

* A version greatly superior to those of his predecessors issued, a few years after this remark was made, from the pen of William Preston, Esq., accompanied by a large body of interesting notes and observations.

are found among his works. Virgil has copied him in his Georgics; and Cæsar Germanicus finished an entire translation in Latin hexameters, which is still extant. Paul the apostle has quoted him in his address to the Athenians; the phrase, "Τ*ου γαρ και γενος εσμεν*," "for we are also his offspring," being part of the fifth line of the Phænomena.

We have great reason to rejoice when we view the numerous pieces of THEOCRITUS which barbarism and devastation have forborne to touch. Thirty Idyllia and some epigrams compose this treasure, one of the most estimable that ancient literature has bequeathed us. He is said by Suidas to have written likewise *Prætides*, *Hopes*, *Hymns*, *Heroines*, *Dirges*, *Elegies*, and *Iambics*. The Idyllia are chiefly pastoral, panegyrical, and mythological; there are some also of a lighter and humorous species. Of the pastoral pieces, I prefer the *Vernal Voyage*: the *Fishermen*, which can with little propriety be classed under any of the heads enumerated, is likewise a production of exquisite descriptive beauty. Having elsewhere given my opinion more at large on the genius of Theocritus, to those pages I refer, and shall merely observe in this place that an excellent edition of the poet has been published by Warton, and that the translation by Polwhele is by far the best we have. *

* Quintilian here supposes himself to be asked why he had not introduced the names of Pisander, Nicander, Euphorion, and Tyrtæus. He replies, that he was not unacquainted with these writers, nor did he mean to condemn them; for that it

Among the writers of Greek Elegy, to whom Quintilian now adverts, CALLIMACHUS holds the first rank. He wrote a number of elegies which were highly esteemed, and a variety of satirical pieces, some of which were extremely bitter and acrimonious. Apollonius the Rhodian was his pupil; and having conducted himself with ingratitude towards his tutor, the offended poet lashed him with unrelenting severity in a poem, entitled *Ibis*, of which the Ibis of Ovid is an imitation. Of the numerous productions of this spirited poet, some hymns, one elegy, and a few epigrams remain. These have been elegantly translated by Mr. Tytler.

Next in rank to Callimachus, the author of the Institutes has placed PHILETES, preceptor to Ptolemy Philadelphus. He has been much

frequently occurs at magnificent entertainments, that after having treated ourselves with the best dishes, the more common please by their variety. As the names of these authors however are to be found in the text of Quintilian, I shall just notice their productions. *Pisander* wrote an epic poem, entitled *Heraclea*, in which the exploits of Hercules are enumerated: it has perished. *Nicander*, a poet and physician of Ionia, wrote many various works, and among his poems are the *Theriaca*, the *Alexipharmica*, and the *Georgica*: the two former are extant, and Virgil is said to have been indebted to the latter. *Euphorion* lived during the reign of Antiochus the Great, and was celebrated for his poetical compositions; none of which however remain. The *War Elegies* of *Tyrtæus* were renowned for their martial sentiment, and for their majesty and energy. During the contest between Lacedæmon and Messene, he is said to have led the Spartans to victory, chanting a war-song, which inspired the utmost valour and enthusiasm. A few fragments only remain, which have lately been translated by Mr. Polwhele, and imitated by Mr. Pye.

celebrated by the ancients for the beauty of his elegies, and the merit of his epigrams. Propertius compares him with Callimachus: El. iii. 1. It is reported of this poet by Ælian that he was naturally so slender in form, and had reduced himself so much by excessive study, that he was compelled when he went abroad to affix plates of lead to his sandals, and to put pieces of the same metal into his pockets lest the wind should blow him down! The writings of this poet are entirely lost.

Archilochus, the inventor of iambic verse, is praised by the Rhetorician for energy of style, and for periods brilliant and abounding in life and vigour; and he observes that this poet would have been inferior to none had he not proved unfortunate in the choice of his subjects. He was a man in private life of unblemished virtue, but, as a satirist, severe and even cruel in the extreme. The tragical story of Lycambes is a striking proof of the power of his satire, and of the unrelenting nature of his disposition. Lycambes had promised him his daughter Neobulè in marriage; but an offer from a person of superior rank and fortune occurring in the interim, the father forgot the poet, and presented the fair one to the wealthy suitor. Inflamed with indignation and revenge, the irritated bard dipped his pen in gall, and poured forth such a torrent of invective on the miserable Lycambes and his family, that in despair he committed suicide, and terminated his life by a halter; an example which, it is said, all his daughters unhappily imitated, unable to sup-

port the defamation with which the disappointed poet had overwhelmed them. The hymns of Archilochus have been highly extolled; one on Hercules and Iolāus was usually thrice sung in honour of the Olympic victors. Horace has frequently mentioned Archilochus, and considers himself as an imitator of his style and manner, avoiding however his severity and caustic bitterness. In the ensuing lines he gives us his opinion of the conduct of the Parian poet, and boasts himself the first who introduced the iambic measure at Rome:

——— Parios ego *primus* iambos
Ostendi Latio, numeros animosque secutus
Archilochi, *non res, et agentia verba Lycamben.*
Epist. lib. i. 19.

First to the Latian world I shewed,
Iambics in the Parian mode,
Of great Archilochus the strain
And spirit laboured to attain,
But not his language or his matter,
Which stung Lycambes by its satire.
BOSCAWEN.

Archilochus is said to have fallen in battle by the hand of Calonidas, who sacrificed his own son to the manes of the poet, with a view of atoning the vengeance of Apollo. Archilochus wrote elegies, satires, odes, and epigrams, of which only one epigram remains, and that of little value, preserved by Athenæus.

Quintilian now makes a transition to the lyric poets of Greece; and though he remarks

they are nine in number, he has noticed but four, Pindar, Stesichorus, Alcæus, and Simonides. I shall introduce however the entire company, commencing with PINDAR, whom the critic very justly considers as excelling the rest in the sublimity, enthusiasm, and beauty of his conception, and by his matchless powers of harmony. It is greatly to be regretted that so small a portion of his inimitable productions should have been granted to our curiosity and admiration; his hymns, his poems in honour of Apollo, and his dithyrambics to Bacchus, have perished; we alone possess his odes on the victories obtained at the Olympic, Isthmian, Pythian, and Nemean games; and these, whether the composition or the train of idea be considered, are alike entitled to the highest praise. A valuable edition of this poet was published by West and Welsted at Oxford, in 1697, and he has been frequently translated, but, as might be expected, with no great success. Mr. West has been the most fortunate, and his version has certainly much merit; but the best idea of the style and manner of Pindar may be derived from the odes of Gray, who has caught the very spirit and enthusiasm of the Grecian. The following stanza is a translation from the first Pythian of Pindar:

O Sovereign of the willing soul,
Parent of sweet and solemn-breathing airs,
Enchanting shell! the sullen Cares,
And frantic Passions hear thy soft controul.
On Thracia's hills the Lord of War
Has curb'd the fury of his car,

And dropp'd his thirsty lance at thy command.
Perching on the sceptred hand
Of Jove, thy magic lulls the feather'd king
With ruffled plumes, and flagging wing:
Quench'd in dark clouds of slumbers lie
The terror of his beak, and lightnings of his eye.

Mr. Wakefield thinks the latter part of this passage, commencing at "Perching on, &c." a weak imitation, and has translated the lines literally thus:

On Jove's imperial rod the king of birds
Drops down his flagging wings: thy thrilling sounds
Soothe his fierce beak, and pour a sable cloud
Of slumber o'er his eye-lids: up he lifts
His flexile back, shot by thy piercing darts.
Mars smooths his rugged brow, and nerveless drops
His lance, relenting at the choral song.

Notes on Gray.

It will no doubt be pleasing to see how another celebrated genius has imitated this exquisite morsel of Pindar:

——————With slacken'd wings,
While now the solemn concert breathes around,
Incumbent o'er the sceptre of his lord,
Sleeps the stern eagle; by the number'd notes
Possess'd; and satiate with the melting tone;
Sovereign of birds. The furious God of war
His darts forgetting, and the rapid wheels
That bear him vengeful o'er the embattled plains,
Relents.

AKENSIDE's *Hymn to the Naiads.*

According to Suidas, Pindar was greatly indebted to the Ladies; for he studied with Myrtis, who distinguished herself by her lyric poetry, and was afterwards under the tuition of the beautiful and accomplished Corinna, who five times snatched the victory from her pupil in the public contests of Greece. *

* There is an excellent edition of Pindar by the learned Heyne, and which has lately received improvement in a second impression.

No. XXXIV.

Genius of ancient Greece! "thy" faithful steps
Well-pleas'd I follow thro' the sacred paths
Of nature and of science; nurse divine
Of all heroic deeds and fair desires!
——————————— Guide my way
Thro' fair Lycéum's walk, the green retreats
Of Academus, and the thymy vale,
Where oft inchanted with Socratic sounds,
Ilissus pure devolv'd his tuneful stream
In gentler murmurs. AKENSIDE.

IN all the essential requisites for lyric poetry, in sublimity of thought, harmony of versification and beauty of language, STESICHORUS was not esteemed inferior to Pindar. Quintilian even asserts that he sustained all the majesty of epic poetry on the lyre, and would have risen to the sublimity of Homer had he not been too redundant. He was greatly beloved and admired in Greece, and the inhabitants of Catana, where he died, in his native island of Sicily, buried him magnificently at the public cost. "A tomb was erected to his memory near one of the city gates, which was

thenceforward called the gate of Stesichorus; this tomb was composed of eight columns, had eight steps and eight angles after the cabalistical numbers of Pythagoras, whose mysterious philosophy was then in general vogue; the cubic number of eight was emblematic of strength, solidity, and magnificence, and from this tomb of Stesichorus arose the Greek proverb Πάντα Ὀκτώ, by which was meant any thing perfect and complete. Phalaris of Agrigentum erected a temple to his name, and decreed him divine honours; all the cities in Sicily conspired in lamenting the death of their favourite poet, and vied with each other in the trophies they dedicated to his memory." * His compositions were chiefly written in the Doric dialect, and formed twenty-six books, of which, I am sorry to say, a few fragments only remain.

Alcæus, the contemporary of Sappho, was a native of Mitylene, in the isle of Lesbos, and the supposed inventor of the *barbiton*, or harp. He was an enthusiastic lover of liberty, though, if report be true, possessed of little courage; for he fled from a battle which he had excited against Pittacus, and left his arms in the hands of his enemies, who hung them up in triumph in the temple of Minerva. His lyrics consisted of amatory, bacchanalian, political, and martial effusions; but, except a few fragments in Athenæus, all have perished in the night of ignorance and barbarism. Horace entertained a very high opinion of this bard, and from his

* Observer, vol. ii. p. 101.

eulogium may be derived the clearest idea of his genius and merits.

Et te sonantem plenius aureo,
Alcæe, plectro dura navis,
Dura fugæ mala, dura belli!
Utrumque sacro digna silentio
Mirantur umbræ dicere: sed magis
Pugnas et exactos tyrannos
Densum humeris bibit aure vulgus.
Lib. ii. Od. 13.

Alcæus strikes the golden strings,
And seas, and war, and exile sings:
Thus while they strike the various lyre
The ghosts the sacred sounds admire;
But when Alcæus lifts the strain
To deeds of war and tyrants slain,
In thicker crowds the shadowy throng
Drink deeper down the martial song.
FRANCIS.

The Alcaic measure is derived from the practice of this poet.

Every lover of Grecian literature will deplore the loss which poetry has sustained in the destruction of the works of SIMONIDES, the most pathetic writer perhaps of antiquity. His lyric compositions were chiefly of the elegiac kind; he was the author also of some dramatic pieces, and of two epic poems, one on Cambyses, king of Persia, and another on the battle of Salamis. A few fragments are all that are left us of these valuable compositions: that descriptive of Danaë and her child I have already noticed and praised; nor can the following imitation of it, which is

copied from the Adventurer, be too much admired. "Those who would form a full idea of the delicacy of the Greek," says Dr. Warton, "should attentively consider the following happy imitation of it, which I have reason to believe is not so extensively known, or so warmly admired as it ought to be; and which, indeed, far excels the original. The poet having pathetically painted a great princess taking leave of an affectionate husband on his death-bed, and endeavouring afterwards to comfort her inconsolable family, adds the following particulars."

His conatibus occupata, ocellos
Guttis lucidulis adhuc madentes
Convertit, puerum sopore vinctum
Quà nutrix placido sinu fovebat:
" Dormis," inquit, " O miselle, nec te
" Vultus exanimes, silentiumque
" Per longa atria commovent, nec ullo
" Fratrum tangeris, aut meo dolore;
" Nec sentis patre destitutus illo,
" Qui gestans genibusve brachiove,
" Aut formans lepidam tuam loquelam,
" Tecum mille modis inepticbat.
" Tu dormis, volitantque qui solebant
" Risus, in roseis tuis labellis. ——
" Dormi, parvule! nec mali dolores
" Qui matrem cruciant tuæ quietis
" Rumpant somnia. — Quando, quando, tales
" Redibunt oculis meis sopores!"

This last passage, "Quando," &c. is exquisitely beautiful, natural, and pathetic; and the whole, as Dr. Warton has justly observed, com-

bines the pathos of Euripides with the elegance of Catullus. A satirical production of this poet is also extant.

SAPPHO, for the uncommon sweetness and impassioned strain of her composition entitled the tenth Muse, was a native of Lesbos. The unrestrained violence of her tender passions involved her in ruin: for, being enamoured of Phaon, a youth who felt no reciprocal desire, in despair she threw herself from Mount Leucas, and perished. Her compositions, which formed nine books of lyric verses, independent of elegies, epigrams, &c. were deemed by the ancients of unparalleled beauty; the utmost felicity of language, the most voluptuous tenderness, and occasionally the most exquisite descriptive touches, were characteristic of her muse; and after her death the Lesbians paid her divine honours, and stamped their money with her image. Horace has imitated, and has frequently mentioned her in terms of lavish applause. In the following pleasing passage, after celebrating Pindar, Stesichorus, Simonides, Alcæus, and Anacreon, he gracefully introduces the Lesbian muse:

Non, si priores Mæonius tenet
Sedes Homerus, Pindaricæ latent
Ceæque, et Alcæi minaces,
Stesichorique graves Camenæ.
Nec, si quid olim lusit Anacreon,
Delevit ætas: spirat adhuc amor,
Vivúntque commissi calores
Æoliæ fidibus puellæ. Lib. iv. Od. 9.

Urivall'd tho' great Homer reign,
Yet dear to fame are Pindar's lays;
Stesichorus, the Cean strain,
And bold Alcæus, claim immortal praise:

Nor yet by time decays the wreath
Anacreon's playful fingers move;
The Æolian maid's soft numbers breathe
The sighs of tenderness, the soul of love.

BOSCAWEN.

Of the poetry of Sappho only two odes remain entire; one, a hymn to Venus, the other an amorous ode; both have been translated by Phillips, the latter with great spirit and beauty. A few fragments also exist, whose extreme elegance occasions bitter regret for the loss we have sustained, In the "Wreath" of Du Bois, there is a very accurate and elegant prose version of the ode to Venus.

ALCMAN, a native of Lacedemon, was the inventor of love-songs and the elegiac measure; all who preceded him having constantly written in hexameter verse. Alcman was addicted to the pleasures of the table, and so popular for the beauty and excellence of his amatory compositions, that he was the favourite of the Fair; who committed his effusions to memory, and sang them at every entertainment, and in every society. The Spartans triumphed in the production of such a genius, and erected a monument to his memory. Notwithstanding the celebrity, however, which this bard of love once enjoyed, he has suffered so much from the depredations of time, that his very name is scarcely known

to the moderns. Some fragments preserved by Athenæus, Hephæstion, Eustathius, and Plutarch, are the only proofs that he once existed.

Ibycus, the lyric poet of Rhegium, is a name, if possible, still more obscure than that of Alcman. He lived five hundred and forty years before Christ, and was highly esteemed for the spirit and dignity of his lyrical productions. None of his writings have reached our times. Ælian has given a very singular and almost incredible account of the manner of his death. "He was attacked and murdered," says he, "by robbers, and, when dying, implored the assistance of some Cranes who were at that moment passing over his head. The villains a few days after observing the same flight of Cranes in the market-place, one of them exclaimed, Αἱ Ἴβυκου ἐκδικοι παρεισιν, *There are the birds that are conscious of the death of Ibycus.* This exclamation and the recent murder exciting suspicion in the people, they secured the assassins, who confessed their guilt."

The sprightly and voluptuous odes of Anacreon are well known to every lover of the lighter muses. They abound in suavity, gaiety, and the most elegant imagination, and possess a style and manner so peculiar, as to have designated the whole class of similar compositions by the term *Anacreontic.* Yet, however various the attempts which have been made to imitate these beautiful trifles, not many have succeeded; the very style and character of the Teïan bard being in general grossly mistaken. Among the

ancients, Horace has happily copied his graces and vivacity; among the moderns, Cowley. Love and wine were enjoyed by Anacreon without restraint, and to a very late period of existence; untainted with avarice, and careless as to the occurrences and vicissitudes of life, he appears to have spent his time in one continued scene of voluptuous ease and conviviality. He was greatly beloved by Polycrates the tyrant of Samos, and by Hipparchus the son of Pisistratus. Hermesianax of Colophon has finely contrasted Anacreon with the sublime poet of Mitylene.

> Alcæus strung his sounding lyre,
> And smote it with a hand of fire,
> To Sappho, fondest of the fair,
> Chanting the loud and lofty air,
>
> Whilst old Anacreon, wet with wine,
> And crown'd with wreaths of Lesbian vine,
> To his unnatural minion sung
> Ditties that put to blush the young.

The last of the nine lyric poets of ancient Greece is BACCHYLIDES, the nephew of Simonides, a native of the island of Ceos. His works consisted of hymns, odes, and epigrams, which were preferred by Hiero to the compositions of Pindar. They were rich in moral sentiment; on which account the Emperor Julian so much esteemed them, that he was in the habit of committing them to memory, and of frequently repeating them. Horace, it is

said, has imitated him in several of his pieces, more particularly in his prophecy of Nereus, which is founded on an ode of the Grecian, in which he introduced Cassandra prophesying the fall of Troy.* A few mutilated verses are all the remains of Bacchylides.

Returning now to the text of Quintilian, we shall find him expatiating on the great merits of the *Old Comedy:* he extols it for its force and energy; he terms it grand, elegant, and beautiful, and observes that, next to Homer, it is best calculated to form the orator. Its noblest writer, ARISTOPHANES, was one of the most popular authors of antiquity: he lashed with unrelenting severity the vices and follies of his age; and though in exposing the crimes around him he has frequently violated decency and decorum, at least according to modern ideas, yet he generally succeeded in confounding and punishing the perpetrators of enormity. Cleon deeply felt the energy and powers of his genius, and in consequence of the poet's invective, lost his popularity, and was fined five talents by the government. Besides broad humour and sparkling wit, the comedies of Aristophanes occasionally exhibit the most splendid and sublime imagery, emulating the enthusiasm of Pindar and Æschylus. His style is generally considered as the best model of Attic purity: "If any man," says Cumberland, "would wish to know the language as

* This prophetic ode of Horace, it is supposed, furnished Gray with the first Idea of his noble production, "The Bard."

it was spoken by Pericles, he must seek it in the scenes of Aristophanes." * The exquisite sweetness and purity of his diction so enraptured Plato, that he represents the Graces as seeking for a durable mansion, and fixing at last in the bosom of Aristophanes:

" Ut templum Charites, quod non labatur, haberent, invenere tuum pectus, Aristophanes." †

We are indebted to one of the most eloquent fathers of the Church, St. Chrysostom, whose partiality for our author was so great that he usually laid him under his pillow, for the valuable comedies we have left. Aristophanes wrote about sixty dramas, eleven of which are in our possession. The *Plutus*, the *Frogs*, and the *Clouds*, have been translated, the latter with such spirit and felicity by Mr. Cumberland, that the public has become anxious, should health and leisure still attend him, to have an entire version of Aristophanes from his pen. ‡

In point of chronology, Cratinus and Eupolis should precede Aristophanes: but I adhere to the verbal arrangement of Quintilian; " *Aristophanes, et Eupolis, Cratinusque præcipui.*" Of EUPOLIS, although the titles of twenty of his comedies are extant, but a few fragments remain. He was still more bold and

* Observer, vol. iii. p. 139.

† Scaliger, ex Platone.

‡ What Mr. Cumberland was unhappily prevented by death from accomplishing, is about to be laid before the public by Thomas Mitchell, A. M., late Fellow of Sidney-Sussex College, Cambridge.

personal in his satire than Aristophanes, and spared neither the people nor their magistrates. The Debauchee, the Impostor, and the Cheat, trembled at his reproof, and were compelled at least to assume the form of virtue. He wanted however the purity and grace of style for which Aristophanes was celebrated, being more attentive to unveil the vices of his contemporaries than to soothe their ears by the harmony of his language. His tomb was erected on the banks of the Æsopus in Sicyonia, and on this tomb, it is recorded, expired his favourite dog, who, from attachment to his master, and sorrow for his loss, refused all aliment, until death put a period to his sufferings.

Cratinus, the son of Callimedes the Athenian, and senior in age to both Eupolis and Aristophanes, was perhaps the severest satirist of the three. He possessed a vivid imagination, and a style abounding in ornament; and obtained no less than nine prizes. Cratinus lived to the age of ninety-seven, though he indulged very freely in the bottle, and gave loose to all his passions. Within a short period of his death he composed a comedy, aptly named "The Flaggon," as a reply to Aristophanes, who had ridiculed the infirmities he laboured under, and which were attributed to his intemperance in drinking. The old poet obtained the laurel and a complete triumph over his opponent, and shortly afterwards expired in the arms of victory. He wrote thirty comedies, of which scarce a fragment remains. Cratinus, Eupolis, and Aristophanes, were the chief sup-

porters of the old comedy, and Horace has therefore selected them from the crowd of comic writers; he has drawn their characters in a few masterly strokes.

Eupolis atque Cratinus, Aristophanésque poetæ,
Atque alii, quorum comœdia prisca virorum est,
Si quis erat dignus describi, quod malus aut fur,
Quod mœchus foret, aut sicarius, aut alioqui
Famosus, multâ cum libertate notabant.
Lib. i. Sat. 4.

The comic poets, in its earliest age,
Who form'd the manners of the Grecian stage,
Was there a villain, who might justly claim
A better right of being damn'd to fame,
Rake, cut-throat, thief, whatever was his crime,
They freely stigmatiz'd the wretch in rhime.
FRANCIS.

Quintilian now adverting to the Tragic Muse adduces the mighty name of ÆSCHYLUS as the father of regular tragedy. "*Sublimis et gravis et grandiloquus*" are the epithets he bestows upon him, though with regard to the latter he observes that it has been carried too far, "*usque ad vitium.*" Æschylus greatly improved the decorations and apparatus of the stage; he invented the mask, the robe, the buskins, and a platform in lieu of a cart; he curtailed also the chorus, and introduced more dialogue and action. There is a peculiar wild sublimity and martial ardour in this poet, who delighted in exhibiting the awful, the terrible, and the magnificent. His language is very figurative and metaphorical, now rising into expression at once

clear, daring, and sublime, now sinking into obscurity and turgescence. His plots are inartificial, but his chief characters are admirably sustained. He obtained many prizes, and Aristophanes in his "Frogs," considers him as far superior in point of genius to either Sophocles or Euripides. He is said to have written above one hundred tragedies, the titles of all which have been preserved and published by Meursius. Of this numerous collection only seven survive; these are, however, of incomparable excellence, though abounding in passages of great difficulty, and which have exercised the patience and ingenuity of a vast body of critics. The editions of Stanley, Pauw, and Porson, are highly esteemed. A poetical translation also of very singular merit has been presented to the public by Archdeacon Potter. I know no version of any ancient poet, considering the obscurities of the original, that confers more honour on British learning, taste, and genius.

Sophocles carried the dramatic art to great perfection; he introduced more actors and more dialogue, and rendered the chorus perfectly connected with and illustrative of the business of the drama. Majesty, sweetness, and harmony are the characteristics of his style. His conceptions often rise to sublimity, and he abounds in description and pathos. His *Philoctetes* is the most beautifully descriptive and pathetic composition of antiquity; it is perhaps the only instance on the Greek stage where the wild romantic scenery of nature is freely introduced. This piece and his *Œdipus Coloneus* are, in my

opinion, the most pleasing, if not the most elaborate, productions of the Grecian drama. Sophocles, like Milton, was very partial to the Nightingale, and has frequently celebrated its delicious strains. Mr. Huntingford, in his Apology for the Monostrophics, has quoted many passages in which the poet evinces his admiration of and regard for it, and Collins, in his Ode to Simplicity, has not forgotten Sophocles and his favourite bird.

By all the honey'd store
On Hybla's thymy shore;
By all her blooms, and mingled murmurs dear;
By her * whose love-lorn woe,
In evening musings slow,
Sooth'd sweetly sad Electra's poet's ear.

It is somewhat singular, however, that the noblest and sweetest description of the song of this plaintive warbler, should be the production of a prose-writer. Who can adduce on the subject a morsel of such impressive beauty as the following? —

"But the nightingale, another of my airy creatures, breathes such sweet loud music out of her little instrumental throat, that it might make mankind to think miracles are not ceased. He that at midnight, when the very labourer sleeps securely, should hear, as I have very often, the clear airs, the sweet descants, the natural rising and falling, the doubling and re-

* The Ander, or nightingale.

doubling of her voice, might well be lifted above earth, and say, '*Lord, what music hast thou provided for the Saints in Heaven, when thou affordest bad men such music on earth!*"

ISAAC WALTON.

Of one hundred and twenty plays which Sophocles is said to have composed, but seven are preserved; these have been well edited by Johnson and Morell, and the translations of Franklin and Potter are perspicuous and elegant.

EURIPIDES, from his success in delineating the tender emotions of the heart, is usually, and perhaps justly, esteemed one of the most pathetic poets of antiquity. His versification and diction are easy, flowing, and harmonious, and there is a simplicity in his style and manner well suited to the general character of his drama. He wants, however, the sweetness and majesty of Sophocles, and the sublimity and splendid imagination of Æschylus. He every where abounds in moral sentiment, and frequently uses the very language of the schools, a circumstance which has occasionally given a declamatory and didactic air to his scenes. He has been a great favourite with some of our first poets; Milton and Collins appear to have studied and imitated him with exquisite taste; the latter, in his Ode to Pity, has introduced the following very striking appeal:

By Pella's bard, a magic name,
By all the griefs his thought could frame,

Receive my humble trie:
Long, Pity, let the nations view
Thy sky-worn robes of tenderest blue,
And eyes of dewy-light!

Euripides wrote seventy-five tragedies, nineteen of which are extant. They have been translated by Potter, though in a style certainly inferior to his Æschylus or Sophocles. Mr. Porson is now engaged in publishing separately accurate editions of the dramas of this poet.*

Literature has seldom sustained a greater injury than in the loss of the works of MENANDER. He was the principal writer of the *New Comedy*, and his compositions were highly valued for their elegance, urbanity, and wit. His characters were admirably drawn, and his pictures of human life faithful to nature. His eloquence, and his delineation of the passions and manners, are much extolled by Quintilian, who, at the close of his criticism on this author, observes,

"Ille quidem omnibus ejusdem operis auctoribus abstulit nomen, et fulgore quodam suæ claritatis tenebras obduxit."

"He is superior to every author in the same department, and by the splendour of his genius has he thrown them into obscurity."

Except the *Phormio* and the *Hecyra*, Terence copied all his comedies from Menander,

* On the plan of the late Professor Porson, Mr. Charles James Blomfield and Professor Monk have been for some years engaged in editing separately the dramas of Æschylus and Euripides.

and he presents us with the best idea we can now form of the elegant genius of the Greek poet. Terence, however, is said by Julius Cæsar to have wanted the humour of Menander, and he therefore terms him *dimidiatum Menandrum*. According to Apollodorus, Menander wrote one hundred and five comedies, the titles of seventy-three of which are to be met with in Hertelius. All these have perished, except a few fragments, which have been collected and translated with great elegance and spirit by Mr. Cumberland in the Observer. *

I cannot here avoid transcribing the introductory stanza of some most beautiful lines prefixed by T. Faber to his edition of Terence; they so immediately apply to the author under consideration.

Sacrum Menandri pectus
Aura jam reliquerat,
Vagulaque animula
Elysias penetrarat oras:
Tum dolore parcitæ,
Virgineasque
Suffusæ lachrymis genas,
Huc et illuc cursitarunt
Perque lucos, perque montes,

* Michael Psellus, of the *eleventh century*, was knowing in the *Greek Philosophy and Poetry* of the *purer* ages; and for his various and extensive learning was ranked among the first and ablest scholars of his time.

Besides his Treatise of Mathematics, his Comments on Aristotle, and a number of other works, (many of which are printed,) he is said to have commented and explained no less than *twenty-four Comedies of Menander*; a Treatise now lost, though extant, as well as the Comedies, in so *late* a period.

HARRIS's *Philological Inquiries*, p. 291.

Perque vallium sinus,
Cursitarunt Gratiæ,
Querentes sibi
Queis nova sedibus
Templa ponere possent.

PHILEMON, the contemporary of Menander, and frequently by a misjudging populace preferred to him, is allowed the second rank by Quintilian. He was possessed of a most amiable disposition, and, through great temperance and a placid frame of mind, attained to the extraordinary age of one hundred and one years. His comedies were of a tender, sentimental, and moral cast, and his style and diction, it is said, possessed much sweetness and harmony. He composed ninety comedies, of which but a few fragments have reached us; these have been translated by Mr. Cumberland with his usual felicity.

No. XXXV.

——————————— Studious let me sit,
And hold high converse with the MIGHTY DEAD:
Sages of ancient time, as gods rever'd,
As gods beneficent, who blest mankind
With arts, with arms, and humaniz'd a world.
THOMSON.

THOUGH numerous other writers of the New Comedy were contemporary with and existed after Philemon, yet Quintilian has not thought it necessary to mention them; their works, indeed, with the exception of a few fragments, are all lost, and though extant in the time of Quintilian, were esteemed by him, probably, inferior to the productions of the two authors we have mentioned. Deserting therefore the poetic region, our Critic now introduces the reader to the historic tribe. Of course we immediately encounter the name of HERODOTUS, the father of genuine history, whose nine books, containing an account of the Wars of Persia against Greece, and of the most celebrated nations of the world, are happily preserved entire. The author recited these books at the Olympic Games before a full assembly of all Greece, and with such rapture were they received, and so much were they admired for the interest and

beauty of the narration, and for their exquisite sweetness, and grace of style, that the names of the nine Muses were unanimously given to them on the spot.

His eager country, in th' Olympic vale,
Throngs with proud joy to catch the martial tale;
Behold! where Valour, resting on his lance,
Drinks the sweet sound in rapture's silent trance,
Then, with a grateful shout of fond acclaim,
Hails the just herald of his country's fame!

HAYLEY.

Herodotus has been taxed with credulity, and with the narration of many wonderful tales; some of these, however, the researches of modern times have confirmed, more especially the late geographical discoveries in Africa *; and it should be recollected that the historian himself vouches not for the authenticity of these relations, but rests them upon the credit of the authors and travellers from whom he received them. His speeches are beautiful and appropriate, and his diction so elegant and delicious, that even the stern Dionysius affirms, "he is one of those enchanting writers whom you peruse to the last syllable with pleasure, and still wish for more." There is a correct edition of Herodotus by Wesseling; and a good translation has lately been executed by Mr. Beloe.

* See an Essay by Professor Heeren of Göttingen on Herodotus, and the River Joliba in Africa, Monthly Magazine for December, 1799.

THUCYDIDES, the son of Olorus, was present, at the age of fifteen, at the recital of the history of Herodotus at the Olympic Games; and, it is recorded, burst into tears of joy and emulation, so agitated, and, at the same time, so charmed was he by the masterly production of the historian. His history of the Peloponnesian war, which still exists in eight books, though the last is somewhat defective, is written with the utmost accuracy, impartiality, and fidelity, and in a style remarkable for energy, conciseness, and purity. Ardent, rapid, and delineating his subject with a few bold but happy strokes, he leaves much to the imagination of the reader. In his harangues he is animated and nervous, and superior even to Herodotus. He was so great a favourite with Demosthenes that he copied him eight times, and could repeat him by heart. The following concise but admirable contrast between the two historians does honour to the style and judgment of Quintilian.

"Densus et brevis, et semper instans sibi Thucydides; dulcis, et candidus, et fusus Herodotus: ille concitatis, hic remissis affectibus melior: ille concionibus, hic sermonibus: ille vi, hic voluptate."

"Thucydides is dense, concise, and ever pressing on himself. Herodotus is sweet, perspicuous, and diffuse: the former excels in vehement passions, the latter in mild persuasion: this, in animated harangues; that, in familiar speeches: this in strength, that in beauty."

Duker has given a good edition of the original; and the best translation of this author, to

whom it must be a difficult task to do justice, is by Smith.

Theopompus of Chios, the disciple of Isocrates, is deemed by Quintilian next in merit to Herodotus and Thucydides. His reflections, however, were often too satirical and illiberal, and, in the judgment of the critic, he had more of the orator than of the historian in his composition, having made rhetoric his profession long before he ventured into the province of history. With the exception of a few fragments, his productions have entirely perished.

Philistus, the Syracusan, and the favourite of Dionysius, was an imitator of the style and manner of Thucydides, and though much inferior, observes the Rhetorician, in point of energy and strength, possessed greater perspicuity. His history of Sicily in twelve books was much valued; and it is to be regretted that no portion of it has reached our times. Dionysius the Younger sent our historian with a body of troops to quell an insurrection of the Syracusans, but being vanquished, he destroyed himself through despair.

Ephŏrus of Cumæ in Æolia was another disciple of Isocrates, by whose recommendation he was induced to undertake the study and composition of history; yet Isocrates himself has declared that Ephŏrus wanted spirit and required the spur. His history contained a relation of all the engagements and battles that had occurred between the Greeks and Barbarians for a period of seven hundred and fifty years. It was esteemed by the ancients for its fidelity

and elegance, an encomium of which we cannot now estimate the propriety, as no part of the composition is extant.

CLITARCHUS accompanied Alexander the Great in his famous expedition into Persia, and composed a history of his life and exploits, which abounded in wit, and was written in a masterly manner; but, according to Quintilian, he has violated the first requisite of an historian, veracity, and for which no beauty of composition can atone. After this accusation, it may be told, without much regret, that of his historical labours no particle exists.

History, which had long been neglected, was revived by the genius of TIMAGENES. Though a slave to the son of Sylla, his abilities procured him his emancipation, and afterward attracted the notice and the patronage of Augustus, of whose life and reign he wrote a most elegant and interesting history. The unsparing hand of Time has committed this production likewise to oblivion. *

Of the numerous orators of Greece, from whom Quintilian has selected only a few, ten were contemporaries, and over these DEMOSTHENES has been universally allowed a decided

* It is ather singular that Quintilian should have omitted the name of *Polybius*, his history being celebrated for its authenticity, and for its accurate relation of military affairs. It commenced with the Punic wars, and terminated with the conquest of Macedonia by Paulus. It was originally divided into forty books, of which but five remain, with numerous fragments of the twelve succeeding. Polybius was the friend and companion of Scipio, and was present at the siege and capture of Carthage. He has been well translated by Hampton.

superiority. Nothing can be more vehement, more spirited, more concise, clear, and strong, than the character of his style and elocution. Whilst his arguments flash conviction, his periods roll with rapid harmony, yet are they simple in their diction, and, apparently, constructed without art. So sudden and so striking were the effects of his oratory that it has been compared to the lightning of the gods. Greece, roused by his eloquence, assembled in multitudes, and shook the throne of Philip to its foundations.

"Longe princeps Demosthenes," exclaims Quintilian, "ac penè lex orandi fuit: tanta vis in eo, tam densa omnia, ita quibusdam nervis intenta sunt, tam nihil otiosum, is dicendi modus, ut nec quid desit in eo, nec quid redundet invenias."

"Demosthenes is by far the chief of orators, and was esteemed by the ancients the only model of eloquence. Such is his energy and force, so compacted are all things in his style, and so replenished with nerves, so accurate has he been in avoiding any trifling expression, that you can discover nothing wanting in his composition, nothing redundant."

His orations have most fortunately been preserved, and fully justify the applauses of antiquity; a good edition of them has been published by Taylor, in two volumes quarto. To translate Demosthenes, so as to impart a just representation of him, appears to be nearly impossible; it has been attempted, however, though with little success, by Leland and Francis.

ÆSCHINES, the contemporary and rival of Demosthenes, possessed considerable talents: he is allowed by Quintilian to be more full, diffusive, and magnificent than Demosthenes, but he concludes by observing, that if he has more flesh than Demosthenes, he has fewer sinews, "*carnis plus habet, lacertorum minus.*" His style is highly ornamented, and more calculated to soothe than to rouse and animate his audience. Being vanquished in his competition with Demosthenes, he was banished to Rhodes; he there opened a school for eloquence, and had the magnanimity to read and applaud the very orations which had sent him into exile. When his auditors rapturously praised these productions, he generously exclaimed, "What would you have thought, if you had heard him thunder out the words himself?" Only three of his orations are extant. The best edition of these is in the folio copy of the orations of Demosthenes and Æschines, published by Ulpian and Wolf, at Frankfort, in 1604.

HYPERIDES, another rival of Demosthenes, and the disciple of Plato and Socrates, was distinguished for the sweetness, acuteness, and elegance of his style. He is reported to have defended the courtezan Phryne, against a charge of impiety, and perceiving his eloquence ineffectual, he unveiled the bosom of his client, and the judges, unable to resist the influence of beauty, acquitted their too interesting prisoner. Only one oration of Hyperides has endured the lapse of ages, and this is in much estimation for its diction and style.

Lysias, the Syracusan, and a most elaborate and indefatigable orator, was celebrated for the purity and perspicuity of his eloquence; his style was remarkably correct, and perfectly free from any inflation, or any approach toward obscurity or bombast.

"His etate Lysias major, subtilis atque elegans," says Quintilian, "et quo nihil, si oratori satis sit docere, quæras perfectius. Nihil enim et inane, nihil accersitum; puro tamen fonti, quam magno flumine proprior."

"Lysias, anterior to these, is acute and elegant, and were it sufficient merely for the orator to instruct, no one could be better adapted for the purpose. There is nothing trifling, nothing affected in his manner; he resembles more a pure fountain than a great river."

Lysias attained the age of eighty-one; and of two hundred orations which he is said to have composed, thirty-four remain; of these there is an accurate edition by Taylor, and a very good translation by Dr. Gillies.

Isocrates was one of the most skilful and correct masters of composition; his attention to the graces and embellishments of style was so intense and curious, that Quintilian blames him for too much care. His orations, however, possess the utmost dignity, simplicity, and harmony, and display the finest morality, clothed in the purest and sweetest diction. He was too timid to speak in public, and had calculated his eloquence therefore for the schools. Thirty-one of his orations are left us, of which there is an elegant and valuable edition by Auger in

three volumes quarto, printed by Didot; they have also been admirably translated by Dr. Gillies.

The works of DEMETRIUS PHALEREUS on rhetoric, history, and eloquence, are completely lost; he is considered by the author of the Institutes as possessing much ingenuity and great oratorial abilities: he is worthy of being had in remembrance, he observes, if for no other reason than being the last of the Attic writers, who can with propriety be deemed an orator. Cicero has given him the preference to all other writers in the middle species of eloquence; and in his treatise, De Officiis, lib. i. cap. 1., terms him, "disputator subtilis, orator parum vehemens, dulcis tamen." *

In the philosophic department, to which we are now arrived, our attention is immediately arrested, by the celebrated name of PLATO, a man whose acuteness of intellect and splendour of imagination have seldom been surpassed. Sublime in his conceptions, majestic and fascinating in his style, pure in his principles, morals, and life, he seems with justice to have deserved the appellation of "*Divine*," so frequently bestowed upon him by the suffrage of antiquity. "Mihi non hominis ingenio," says Quintilian, "sed quodam Delphico videntur oraculo instinctus." — "He appears to me not so much endowed with the faculties of a man, as inspired by some Delphic oracle."

* The treatise on Rhetoric, falsely ascribed to Demetrius Phalereus, is the composition of Dionysius of Halicarnassus.

His dialogues display the whole of the Socratic philosophy in its utmost purity, and in language so exquisitely sweet and elegant that he was termed by the ancients the Athenian bee: he has added, however, many noble ideas of his own in these discourses, which have afforded objects of imitation to every succeeding age. In this country, Shaftesbury and Harris have made the nearest approaches to the Platonic style.

The morality of Socrates forms but a part of the system of Plato; his fervid imagination delighted to expatiate in the regions of metaphysics and mystical theogony. He was a disciple of Heraclitus and Pythagoras, and maintained the immortality and transmigration of the soul. He taught also the existence of two beings, one self-existent, and the other formed by the power of a pre-existent Creator. The origin of evil, the doctrine of ideal forms, the pre-existence of the human mind, which he terms an emanation from the Deity, and the subserviency of matter to spirit, even in this life, are likewise part of his metaphysical opinions. The novelty, the sublimity, and interesting nature of his inquiries, clothed as they are in the most majestic diction, have rendered him almost an object of adoration to men of warm fancies, and of a speculative turn of mind; even Cicero has exclaimed, "Errare mehercule malo cum Platone, quàm cum istis vera sentire;" and our own Milton, who possessed the most vivid and romantic imagination, early imbibed the enchanting dog-

mata of the Grecian philosopher. His juvenile poetry, especially his *Comus*, abounds in the peculiar conceptions of Plato; and in the *Penseroso* he exclaims;

> —— let my lamp, at midnight hour,
> Be seen in some high lonely tower,
> Where I may oft out-watch the Bear,
> With thrice-great Hermes, or unsphere
> The spirit of PLATO to unfold
> What worlds, or what vast regions hold
> The immortal mind, that hath forsook
> Her mansion in this fleshly nook.

The political abilities of Plato were likewise great, as his *Republic* sufficiently evinces; this, together with his dialogues and some letters, we are happily in possession of. The first edition of Plato came from the press of Aldus at Venice in 1513. The whole of his works have been translated into English by Sydenham, in four volumes quarto, and various versions have been attempted of separate dialogues, especially of the Phædon.

As a model of Attic elegance and purity, we may record XENOPHON as unrivalled; the Graces themselves inspired his composition, and the Goddess of Persuasion dwelt upon his lips. "Ipsæ finxisse sermonem Gratiæ videantur; — et in labris ejus sedisse quandam persuadendi Deum." * His opinions with regard to the divine nature, and the duties of morality and religion, were those of his admired and beloved master, Socrates, of whom in his *Memo-*

* Quintilian.

rabilia he has given so accurate and pleasing an account. As a warrior, as a statesman, as an author, and the father of a family, he was equally excellent. His *Anabasis*, or the retreat of the ten thousand, proclaims him aloud as the first of generals. The *Cyropædia* displays in the most clear and ample manner what should be the conduct of a patriot prince. The beauty, simplicity, and unaffected nature of his style, perhaps unequalled, bear sufficient testimony to his merits as a writer, whilst his *Œconomics*, as Cicero justly observes, unfold such pictures of excellence and domestic felicity, as none but the best of men could describe, and the best of men practise.

O rich in all the blended gifts that grace
Minerva's darling sons of Attic race!
The Sage's olive, the Historian's palm,
The Victor's laurel, all thy name embalm!
Thy simple diction, free from glaring art,
With sweet allurements steals upon the heart,
Pure, as the rill, that nature's hand refines;
Clear, as thy harmony of soul, it shines.
Two passions there by soft contention please,
The love of martial fame, and learned ease:
These friendly colours, exquisitely join'd,
Form the enchanting picture of thy mind.
Thine was the praise, bright models to afford
To Cæsar's rival pen, and rival sword.
Blest, had Ambition not destroy'd his claim
To the mild lustre of thy purer fame!

HAYLEY.

The principal works of Xenophon are extant, and have gone through numerous editions:

those most in use are by Simpson, Hutchinson, and Edwards. His Memorabilia have been well translated by Fielding. The Anabasis has been naturalized by Spelman, and Ashly has given us a good version of the Cyropædia.

Aristotle, one of the first philosophers of Greece, and the founder of the Peripatetic sect, is remarkable for the acuteness, penetration, and profundity of his genius. His style is dense, didactic, and dry, though he occasionally assumes a diction more pleasing and harmonious. His writings, which are nearly all extant, are numerous, and upon various topics. His *Rhetoric*, in three books, displays much lucidity of arrangement, and much depth of investigation. His Poetic is generally allowed to be the production of a masterly critic; though its obscurities, the effect probably of injury from accident or transcription, have given rise to much controversy and a multitude of comments. His *Politics* in eight books, and his *Ethics* in nineteen, form a treasure of civil and moral information; whilst his invention is boldly displayed in his *Categories*, *Analytics*, and *Topics*, which compose one volume under the title of the *Organon*. Besides these he has written *Mathematical* pieces, a large body of *Physics* which record numerous facts in natural history, and fourteen books of *Metaphysics*.

No philosopher ever enjoyed so much celebrity and so long a reign as Aristotle. Suidas, in an elegant but high-flown compliment, has declared that "he was the Secretary of Nature,

and dipt his pen in intellect;" and for centuries he remained dictator of Europe and of part of Asia. From the sixth to the twelfth century he was held incapable of error; and in all the eastern and western churches, the pages of Aristotle, though perused through the medium of wretched translations, were of equal authority with those of the Bible. This blind adoration was of great injury to the cause of science; for as the philosophy of Aristotle was of the most abstracted nature, being frequently employed in disquisitions on matter, mind, and deity, and consequently often very dark and obscure, it is obvious very little utility could be derived from the study of it. At the same time, his boasted syllogistic art involved his readers in a labyrinth of words and useless subtleties, which, so far from advancing science, obstructed, in no small degree, its progress. Experimental philosophy, the only road to knowledge, was totally neglected; and it was not until Aristotle ceased to be an object of veneration, that genuine science reared her head, and began to disperse the surrounding darkness. The politics and ethics of Aristotle, though neglected in the dark ages, whilst his logic and metaphysics were blindly revered, are, by many degrees, the most valuable portion of his works, and these have been lately very happily illustrated and translated by the elegant pen of Dr. Gillies. The poetic, too, is highly indebted to Messrs. Tyrwhitt, Twining, and Pye, for much sound explanatory criticism and comment. It is to the critical labours

of the Grecian Philosopher, to his exquisite acumen and taste, as displayed in this short treatise, that Mr. Pope has paid the following just tribute:

> The mighty STAGYRITE first left the shore,
> Spread all his sails, and durst the deep explore.
> He steer'd securely, and discover'd far,
> Led by the light of the Mæonian star.

A very correct edition of the entire works of Aristotle was published in six volumes folio, by Aldus at Venice, in 1498.

THEOPHRASTUS, so named by Aristotle on account of his eloquence, the brilliancy of his genius, and the beauty of his language, was the successor of the Stagyrite in the Lyceum, and to him we are indebted for the works of his master, the dying philosopher having committed them to his care. Of two hundred treatises which Diogenes affirms Theophrastus to have written, but two are left us; namely, his History of Plants, and his Characters. Both are of considerable value; the latter remarkable for just delineation of character, and for sweetness of style. He has been imitated, and some think excelled, by Bruyere.

According to the plan already laid down, I shall now proceed to arrange the authors of ancient Greece in a tabular form, that our treasures and our losses may be more easily and immediately ascertained. After having done this with regard to the Roman writers, the whole will be terminated with some reflections

on the supposed Alexandrian conflagration, and on the present state of ancient literature. I must here hint, however, that there are several Grecian Authors anterior to or contemporary with Quintilian, whom he has not thought it necessary to notice in his arrangement; and of these it may be proper to mention four, on account of their superior excellence, namely, *Polybius*, *Diodorus Siculus*, *Dionysius of Halicarnassus*, though praised by Quintilian in other parts of his work, and *Epictetus*. There are many also of great value, and whose works are extant, posterior to the age of the Rhetorician. I need only mention *Arrian*, *Lucian*, *Plutarch*, *Pausanias*, and *Longinus*. Of Plutarch, Theodore Gaza has said, and with much judgment, that if all books were lost, and he might recover one, it should be Plutarch.

Authors.	*Compositions Preserved.*	*Compositions Lost.*
Homer.	Iliad, Odyssey, and Battle of the Frogs and Mice.	Margites, Hymns.
Hesiod.	Works and Days, and the Theogenia.	The Eöics, and the Heroic Genealogy.
Antimachus.		The Thebaid, Lydé, &c. &c.
Panyasis.		All his Works.
Apollonius.	The Argonautics.	
Aratus.	The Phænomena.	
Theocritus.	Thirty Idyllia and Epigrams.	Hymns, Dirges, Elegies, &c.
Callimachus.	An Elegy, Hymns and Epigrams.	Many Elegies.
Philetes.		All his Elegies.
Archilochus.		Elegies, Satires, Odes, &c.
Pindar.	Olympian, Isthmian, Pythian, and Nemean Odes.	Dithyrambics. Hymns, &c.
Stesichorus.		Twenty-six books of Odes.
Alcæus.		All his Lyric pieces.
Simonides.	The fragment of Danaë, and a satirical piece.	Elegiac Odes, Dramas, and two epic poems.
Sappho.	Two Odes and Fragments.	Nine books of Lyric poems.
Alcman.		Amatory Odes.
Ibycus.		His Odes.
Anacreon.	Several Odes.	Some Odes.
Bacchylides.		Hymns, Odes, Epigrams.
Aristophanes.	Eleven Comedies.	Forty-nine Comedies.
Eupolis.		Twenty Comedies.
Cratinus.		Thirty Comedies.
Æschylus.	Seven Tragedies.	Ninety-three Tragedies.
Sophocles.	Seven Tragedies.	One hundred and thirteen Tragedies.
Euripides.	Nineteen Tragedies.	Fifty-six Tragedies.

Authors.	*Compositions Preserved.*	*Compositions Lost.*
Menander.		One hundred and five Comedies.
Philemon.		Ninety Comedies.
Herodotus.	Nine books of History.	
Thucydides.	Eight books of History.	
Theopompus.		His entire history.
Philistus.		Twelve books of History.
Ephorus.		His historical writings.
Clitarchus.		His History of Alexander.
Timagenes.		His History of the reign of Augustus.
Demosthenes.	His Orations.	
Æschines.	Three Orations.	Many Orations.
Hyperides.	One Oration.	Many Orations.
Lysias.	Thirty-four Orations.	One hundred and sixty-six Orations.
Isocrates.	Thirty-one Orations.	Several Orations.
Demetrius Ph.		His entire works.
Plato.	Dialogues, Twelve Letters, the Republic.	
Xenophon.	The Anabasis, the Cyropædia, the Memorabilia, the Hellenica, the Œconomics, &c.	
Aristotle.	His Rhetoric, the Poetic, the Politics, the Ethics, the Organon, Mathematics, Physics, Metaphysics, a Poem.	
Theophrastus.	A History of Plants, and the Moral Characters.	One hundred and ninety-eight treatises.

No. XXXVI.

——Rome——————
With heaviest sound, a giant-statue fell;
Push'd by a wild and artless race,
From off its wide ambitious base,
When time his northern sons of spoil awoke,
And all the blended work of strength and grace.
With many a rude repeated stroke,
And many a barb'rous yell to thousand fragments
broke. COLLINS.

PURSUING the same plan as when treating of Grecian literature, Quintilian commences his account of the Roman authors with their great epic poet VIRGIL, of whom Domitius Afer, when asked what poet he thought approached nearest to Homer, replied, "Secundus est Virgilius, propior tamen primo quàm tertio." "Virgil is the second, but nearer the first than the third." To expatiate on the merits of this admirable poet would, after such a multitude of comments and criticisms, be altogether nugatory. It will suffice to observe, that exquisite taste, the utmost sweetness and dignity of versification, and a talent for description, almost unparalleled, are his chief characteristics. Of his *Bucolics*, the first and tenth are beautifully pathetic, and possess the merit

of originality. The *Georgics* form the most finished work of antiquity, and the *Æneid*, though principally built on the Iliad and Odyssey of Homer, and though the six concluding books want the last touches of the author, displays such consummate skill in the conduct and arrangement of the fable, so much felicity in melting into the text the diction and imagery of its predecessors, and, occasionally, so much pathos and delicacy of feeling, as will for ever render it, in spite of all its plagiarisms, a most popular and fascinating poem. The supposed ruins of the mansion of Virgil on the Esquilian hill, have been visited by numbers of poetical pilgrims, who have vied with each other in doing honour to his memory. Let us, therefore, catching the visionary fervour, approach the hallowed spot, and, with the enthusiasm of Silius Italicus,

——————seek the sacred rests
Of Maro's humble tenement; a low
Plain wall remains; a little sun-gilt heap
Grotesque and wild; the gourd and olive brown
Weave the light roof; the gourd and olive fan
Their am'rous foliage, mingling with the vine,
Who drops her purple clusters through the green.
Here let us lie, with pleasing fancy sooth'd:
Here flow'd his fountain; here his laurels grew;
Here oft the meek good man, the lofty bard,
Fram'd the celestial song; or social walk'd
With Horace and the ruler of the world:
——————Thrice glorious days
Auspicious to the Muses! then rever'd,
Then hallow'd was the fount, or secret shade,

Or open mountain, or whatever scene
The Poet chose, to tune the ennobling rhyme
Melodious; ev'n the rugged sons of war,
Even the rude hinds rever'd the Poet's name:
But now, ——another age, alas! is ours——

DYER.

It is scarce possible to avoid quoting here the poetical oath of *De Lille*.

Helas! je n'ai point vû ce séjour enchanté,
Ces beaux lieux ou Virgile a tant de fois chanté,
Mais j'en *jure* et Virgile et ses accords sublimes,
J'irai; de l'Apennin je franchirai les cimes,
J'irai, plein de son nom, plein de ses vers sacrés,
Les lire aux mêmes lieux qui les ont inspirés.

Les Jardins, l. i.

Alas! I've never rov'd those vales among,
Where Virgil whilom tun'd his sacred song;
But by the Bard *I swear*, and lay sublime,
I'll go! O'er Alps on Alps oppos'd I'll climb,
Full of his name, with all his frenzy fir'd,
There will I read the strains those beauteous scenes inspir'd. *

The best edition of Virgil is certainly that of Heyne; there are, however, very good ones by Brunk, Wakefield, and Didot; and we are

* The anonymous translation of 1789, of which many passages are finished with the utmost delicacy and taste. The last line, however, of the above quotation I have taken the liberty to mould into an Alexandrine; that given in the version being, in my opinion, bald and prosaic: it is thus written:

And there I'll read the strains those scenes inspir'd.

indebted, for a correct and elegant translation, to the labours of Pitt and Warton. There is an ease and spirit in many parts of Dryden's version, however, which have never been equalled, especially in the descriptive and martial passages; but he has violated, in numerous instances, the simplicity and delicacy of his original, and the pathos of the poet seems annihilated in his hands. Mr. Beresford's late attempt in blank verse has not met with the attention due to its merit. *

At an humble distance appears the name of MACER, a poet whose compositions were esteemed elegant, but deficient in elevation of style. He wrote several poems on subjects of natural history, namely, on plants, birds, serpents, &c. and he lived to finish an epic poem on the Ruins of Troy, and which he intended as a continuation of the Iliad of Homer. His works have entirely perished. †

Of Lucretius I have said so much elsewhere, that in this place I have little more to observe

* A new version of the Æneid has very lately been given to the world by Dr. Charles Symmons; and it is but justice to declare, that, though far from faultless, it is, from its general tone and character, entitled to a preference over every other translation of this portion of the labours of the Roman poet. Perhaps no nation can boast a better naturalization of this great bard than what we now enjoy from the efforts of *Warton*, *Sotheby*, and *Symmons*.

† The poem *De Virtutibus Herbarum*, under the name of Macer, now extant, was written by Odo, or Odobonus, a physician of the dark ages. It was translated into English by John Lelamar, master of Hereford school, about the year 1373.

WARTON's *History of English Poetry*, vol. ii. p. 167.

than that the six book *De Rerum Natura*, have happily reached us unmutilated.

Cicero was their first editor, and in one of his epistles thus expresses his opinion of their merit. "Lucretii poemata lita sunt multis luminibus ingenii: multæ tamen artis." * No edition of any classic can boast more splendid and correct typography, nor a more acute and ingenious body of annotations, than that which Mr. Wakefield has lately given to the public of this admirable poet, and which has received a just and valuable encomium from the pen of the celebrated Heyne. Mr. Good's translation is now completed, and the public will, I hope, soon be gratified by its publication. A very copious life of Lucretius, including the literary history of his age, will be prefixed to the work, and notes critical and philosophical, upon a large scale, and which convey a vast fund of instruction and amusement, elucidate and decorate the text.

Varro Attacinus was chiefly celebrated for a translation of the *Argonautica* of Apollonius Rhodius. It was deemed correct and elegant; but Quintilian observes that it was not sufficiently rich in expression for the purposes of oratory. He was also the author of a poem *De Bello Sequanico*, which, together with his version of Apollonius, the hand of Time has completely destroyed.

To Ennius many of the Roman poets are

* Epist. ad Q. Fratrem, lib. ii. epist. xi. I have followed the text of Gronovius.

highly indebted. Virgil has transplanted several of his noblest lines and phrases; for though his style was, in general, esteemed rough and unpolished, yet he occasionally produced verses of the utmost harmony and beauty; and his conceptions were always expressed with energy and spirit. Lucretius speaks of him in terms of lavish praise.

Ennius ut noster cecinit, qui primus amœno
Detulit ex Helicone perenni fronde coronam,
Per gentcis Italas hominum quæ clara clueret.
Lib. i.

As Ennius taught, immortal Bard! whose brows
Unfading laurels bound, and still whose verse
All Rome recites entranc'd. Good.

But, perhaps, no passage, in any author, has so exquisitely described the genius and style of Ennius as the following one of Quintilian; the simile and its imagery cannot be sufficiently admired.

"Ennium sicut sacros vetustate lucos adoremus, in quibus grandia et antiqua robora jam non tantam habent speciem, quantam religionem."

"We revere Ennius as we do a grove hallowed for its antiquity, in which the gigantic and moss-grown oaks produce in us not so much a sensation of beauty, as of religious awe and dread."

Ennius was a prolific writer, and composed many tragedies, comedies, and satires, and a long poem on the annals of Rome, in hexameter verse, and an heroic poem in trochaïcs, in

praise of Scipio. Scipio and the Punic war have thrice been the subject of epic poetry; firstly, by the bard under our immediate consideration; secondly, by Silius Italicus, in his poem De Bello Punico; and, thirdly, by Petrarch, who, though acquainted with Ennius, was totally ignorant that Silius had written on the same topic; the manuscript of whose works was not discovered until 1415. Had he read this poem, it is probable he would never have commenced his *Africa*. "Ennius," says he, "has sung fully of Scipio; but, in the opinion of Valerius Maximus, his style is harsh and vulgar. There is no elegant poem which has for its subject the glorious actions of that conqueror of Hannibal. I am resolved to celebrate his victories in the best manner I am * able." Of the productions of Ennius, except a few fragments, nothing is extant. This venerable bard seems to have been very partial to good living and to good wine, and, I fancy, died of the gout, for the account of his death runs thus:

Periit morbo articulari ex nimio vini potu.

Quintilian now adverts to a poet who is highly celebrated for the brilliancy of his wit, and the luxuriancy of his genius. Ovid in all his compositions, with the exception, perhaps, of the Fasti, has displayed a most florid and wanton imagination. He has ever exhausted his subject by minutiæ which diminish the effect of the picture, and annihilate the pleasure of the reader, by leaving nothing for his fancy to conceive or

* Dobson's Life of Petrarch, vol. i. p. 144.

complete. The following description of evening by the more judicious Virgil, though including but two objects, immediately suggests to the reader a number of adjunctive and picturesque circumstances.

> Et jam summa procul villarum culmina fumant
> Majoresque cadunt altis de montibus umbræ.

The village-smoke at evening brings forward the idea of the weary Peasant returning to a cheerful fire and hearty meal, and meeting the affectionate embrace of his wife and children; while the lengthening shades, from lofty hills, suggest a picture of the setting sun, and of the soft and pensive scenery characteristic of the close of a fine day. Had Ovid sate down to draw a similar landscape, he would, probably, have occupied fifty lines in delineating every particular his fervid imagination could body forth, and when the elaborate picture was complete, the two lines of Virgil would be preferred by every man of taste.

The *Heroides* of Ovid are written with much poetical spirit and expression, but, at the same time, abound with the usual defects of their author, great diffusion and great indelicacy. The *Tristia* and the *Elegies* on various subjects, possess much beauty, and much softness and sweetness of imagery and diction, but they want the tenderness and simplicity of Tibullus. His books *De Arte Amandi*, *De Remedio Amoris*, et *Amorum*, do him credit as a poet, but not as a man; the descriptions are rich and highly

finished, and the versification is elegant; but their tendency is to destroy the principles of virtue and morality, and to inculcate a system of lewdness and prostitution. The *Metamorphoses* are chiefly valuable as conveying to us the legendary and mythological fables of antiquity, and appear to be rather a compilation than a work of much invention. His *Fasti*, of which unfortunately but six books remain, are the noblest of his compositions, and the most correct; the *Epistles from Pontus*, the worst in point of style, and in their sentiment disgraceful to the poet, for they betray a mean and pusillanimous mind. Though apparently very unequal to the task, Ovid ventured to court the Dramatic Muse, and produced a tragedy under the title of *Medea*, and of which, to my astonishment, Quintilian speaks with approbation. "Ovidii Medea," says he, "videtur mihi ostendere quantum vir ille præstare potuerit, si ingenio suo temperare quàm indulgere maluisset." "The Medea of Ovid appears to me clearly to evince how much this poet could have excelled, had he chosen rather to repress than to indulge his genius." Unluckily this tragedy has perished, so that the opinion of the critic is secure from contradiction or comment. The *Ibis*, an imitation of Callimachus, is the only satirical performance of this poet; of whose works the best edition is that of Burmannus.

Cornelius Severus was considered by his contemporaries as a better versifier than poet; yet Quintilian observes, that if his poem on the Sicilian war had been finished in the style and

manner in which he had executed the first book, the second rank in epic poetry could not have been refused him. A premature death, however, prevented the completion of his design. In his early youth he composed many pieces of unquestionable taste and genius; these, with his epic production, have, through time or accident, suffered entire destruction.

The untimely death of VALERIUS FLACCUS is mentioned by Quintilian with much regret, and as if poetry had sustained, by that event, a considerable loss. His epic, however, on the Argonautic expedition, near eight books of which were finished previous to his decease, does not warrant the supposition that, had his life been spared, he would have attained to great excellence. It is a general, and, I believe, a just opinion, that he has not risen beyond mediocrity, and that his style is frigid, and frequently inelegant. About the middle of the fifteenth century, Poggio Bracciolini found at the bottom of a dark neglected tower of the Monastery of St. Gall, in France, the three first books, and half of the fourth, of the Argonautics of our author, and had them shortly afterward printed.

Of SALEIUS BASSUS, the author of the Institutes remarks, that such was the vehemence of his poetic genius, that even old age could not mature it. Of a poet whose imagination could thus swallow up every particle of judgment, it is no subject of regret, that not a specimen has been preserved.

Rabirius, wrote a poem on the victory of Augustus at Actium; a production which Seneca has extolled for its elegance and sublimity, and even compared its author to Virgil. "Maximè nostro ævo," says he, "eminent Virgilius *Rabiriusque*." * Quintilian, however, is more temperate in his approbation, and merely recommends him, to those who have leisure, as not unworthy of a perusal. The fate of the two poets, with respect to the preservation of their compositions, has been widely different, for not a line, I believe, of Rabirius remains to support the encomium of Seneca.

Pedo Albinovanus was the author also of an heroic poem, which is now lost, and is classed by the great critic, whom I take for my guide in these disquisitions, with Rabirius. Of course I place him in the ranks of mediocrity.

We have now to introduce a poet of exalted genius, and to whose merits, except by a very few individuals, sufficient attention has not been shewn. Even Quintilian has been guilty of injustice toward Lucan, when he enumerates him among the orators rather than the poets. The *Pharsalia*, though unfinished, is one of the most spirited productions of antiquity, and when considered as the effort of a very young man, discloses proof of greater genius than any poetical composition in Roman literature. Noble and sublime in sentiment, ardent in the cause of freedom and of virtue, original in its design,

* De Benef. vi. 4.

and bold in its execution, the epic of Lucan inspires a spirit of independence and magnanimity, and should be dear to every literary man, who, with generous ardour, cherishes a love for liberty. The faults of Lucan are the faults of his youth, and perhaps of the period in which he lived. Could he have corrected and finished his poem, the versification would probably have been more polished, and his maturer judgment would have corrected or erased many a passage now chargeable with extravagance and bombast. *Argentaria*, his amiable and accomplished wife, corrected, it is said, after his death, the three first books: she was beautiful and affectionate; and deplored, through life, the cruel and untimely fate of her husband. To his memory she paid a respect bordering upon adoration. Hayley has thus beautifully introduced her in his "Essay on Epic Poetry:"

Ye feeling painters, who with genius warm
Delineate Virtue in her softest form,
Let ARGENTARIA on your canvass shine,
A graceful mourner of her Poet's shrine:
For, nobly fearless at the tyrant's hate,
She mourns her murder'd Lord in solemn state;
With pious care she decks his splendid tomb,
Where the dark cypress sheds its soothing gloom,
There frequent takes her solitary stand,
His dear Pharsalia in her faithful hand;
That hand, whose toil the Muses still rehearse,
Which fondly copied his unfinish'd verse.
See, as she bends before his recent urn,
See tender grief to adoration turn.

O lovely Mourner, could my song bestow
Unfading glory on thy generous woe,
Age after age thy virtue should record,
And thou shouldst live immortal as thy Lord.
Him Liberty shall crown with endless praise,
True to her cause in Rome's degenerate days;
Him, like his Brutus, her fond eye regards.
And hails him as the last of Roman bards.

Lucan wrote a poem on the merits and accomplishments of this charming woman, which has unfortunately perished. Martial, however, has borne witness to the veneration she paid to the memory of her Lord; and Statius, in his *Genethliacon Lucani*, a pleasing little poem on the anniversary of Lucan's birth, pays a high compliment to the beauty, talents, and conjugal affection of Argentaria.

The Pharsalia was in great estimation during the middle ages. Geoffrey of Monmouth in his History, and John of Salisbury in his Policraticon, writers of the eleventh century, have quoted him. He was translated into Italian as early as the year 1310, again in the succeeding century by Montichelli, and into Spanish in 1585. Lucan was first printed in 1469; and so much popularity had he acquired, that before the year 1500 six more editions issued from the press. A very good edition of the Pharsalia has been published by Oudendorp, and one still more valuable by Cumberland, with the notes of Grotius and Bentley. Rowe's version possesses much merit; a translation, however, in blank verse is yet a desideratum. No poet is

better calculated for the cadence and stately march of this mode of versification than Lucan.

The paragraph of the Institutes which immediately succeeds the mention of Lucan, is, I am sorry to say, highly disgraceful to its author, both as a man and as a critic. It contains the most mean and disgusting flattery, and offered up too to one of the most vile and despicable of tyrants. He has here termed *Domitian*, Truth and Virtue blush at the recital, the greatest of poets; that nothing can be more sublime and learned than his works; that he is the favourite of the Muses and Minerva, and that posterity shall pay him still greater eulogia, for that now, the glory of the poet is eclipsed by the splendour of his other virtues !! As some palliation, however, of this offensive passage, let it be considered that Quintilian was preceptor to the adopted heirs of Domitian, and that during the reign of so brutal and ferocious a monster, flattery might be necessary to personal safety.

Hastily quitting this inapplicable encomium, we are immediately introduced by our critic to the elegiac poets, and with high pleasure greet the amiable TIBULLUS, the most sweet and tender of the Roman bards. Four books of his elegies remain, which are chaste and elegant in their style, and abound in passages of the most exquisite simplicity and pathos. Love and Nature seem to have enthroned themselves in the bosom of Tibullus, and the heart replies to his appeal. He appears to have been an attentive observer, too, of the features of the country, and its produce, and to have had a high relish

of the beauties of landscape. His rural imagery is accurately drawn, and frequently displays a rich imagination. Horace, a friend and admirer of our poet, has addressed an ode and an epistle to him, and Ovid has lamented his death with tenderness and sincerity. An excellent edition of Tibullus has been edited by Broukhousius, and there is one by Heyne of great value, the third impression of which is, I believe, now in the press. Dart and Grainger have translated this poet, so difficult to do justice to; the first is a very bad, and the second a version of much merit. The best idea of Tibullus, however, will be obtained, by the English reader, from the imitations, or rather translations of Hammond, which have imbibed a great portion of the sweetness and spirit of their original.

Propertius, though possessing less tenderness and simplicity than Tibullus, is remarkably elegant and figurative in his style, and abounds in learned allusion. There is at all times much spirit and energy in his compositions, and, by some, he has been considered as holding the first rank in elegiac poetry. He has written four books of elegies addressed to Cynthia, of whom it appears he was very deeply enamoured. Pliny, in one of his epistles, when speaking of his friend *Passienus Paulus*, has given us his opinion of Propertius, and it is such as does honour to the bard. "Paulus," observes he, "very successfully emulates the ancients, whose spirit and manner he has closely imitated, and happily restored; especially that of *Propertius*

to whom he is not less related by genius, than by blood, as he particularly resembles that poet in his chief excellency. When you read his elegies, all that is elegant, tender, and agreeable, will conspire to charm you; and you will clearly discover they are animated with the congenial spirit of Propertius." * Mimnermus, Callimachus, and Philetes were, according to the poet's own confession, the models he endeavoured to imitate, and it must in justice be said, that he has surpassed his originals. The best editions of Propertius are by Broukhousius and Burmannus. I am not acquainted with any entire translation of this poet in English; a few of his elegies have been attempted, but with little success. No poet, indeed, appears to me more difficult to translate with accuracy and felicity than Propertius.

Cornelius Gallus, the great friend of Virgil, and to whom he is indebted for immortality, wrote a number of elegiac poems, in which he celebrated the beauty and accomplishments of the slave Lycoris, of whom he had long been passionately enamoured. She, however, unaffected by all his tenderness and attentions, forsook him to follow Mark Antony; and, on this occasion, Virgil composed his tenth eclogue, where the sorrows and sufferings of the deserted poet are delineated in the most natural and glowing colours; it is a complete picture, indeed, of the passion of love, with all its various inconsistencies and complaints. At

* Melmoth's Translation, Book IX. Let. 22.

the close of the Georgics, Virgil, it is said, had originally inserted an affectionate tribute to friendship and to Gallus; but that Augustus, offended with the conduct of Gallus, during his residence in Ægypt, insisted upon its erasure, and the Mantuan bard substituted the episodes of Aristæus and of Orpheus and Eurydice. The style of Gallus is termed harsh by Quintilian, and he was probably far inferior to either Tibullus or Propertius. Nearly all the productions of his genius are lost, and the few fragments which remain are deemed by many spurious, and as belonging to a poet of much later date, Maximinianus Gallus.

The province of Satire, to which the Rhetorician has now conducted us, is peculiarly the growth of Rome; "*Satira tota nostra est,*" he exclaims, and with propriety, for the genuine satire, such as we meet with it in *Horace*, *Persius*, and *Juvenal*, has no prototype among the Grecians. To Lucilius, contemporary with the elder Scipio Africanus, were the Romans indebted for the first specimen of regular satire; and though his versification was rough and inelegant, he had many enthusiastic admirers during his life, and even in the days of Horace and of Quintilian they were still numerous and loud in their applauses. The former has thus expressed his opinion of the merits of this original bard:

——————————— facetus,
Emunctæ naris, durus componere versus.
Nam fuit hoc vitiosus. In hora sæpe ducentos,

Ut magnum, versus dictabat, stans pede in uno:
Cum flueret lutulentus, erat quod tollere velles;
Garrulus, atque piger scribendi ferre laborem;
Scribendi rectè. Lib. i. Sat. iv.

In wit abundant, lively, shrewd:
In composition harsh and rude.
This was his fault: to shew his power,
He'd write two hundred lines an hour.
He flow'd too turbid; (from his lay
Some parts you well might sweep away;)
Loquacious, and in ease delighting
Too much to bear the toil of writing:
Of writing well I mean. BOSCAWEN.

The author of the Institutes is more favourable to the old satirist; he dissents from Horace, especially with regard to the fourth line of the passage just quoted, and declares that Lucilius possessed an admirable erudition, an agreeable liberty of speech, and thence much sharpness and much high-seasoned raillery. We cannot now adjust the difference between the two critics, as the satires of Lucilius are beyond our reach; of thirty which he composed, not one remains entire.

Of the satires and epistles of HORACE so much has been said, and well said too, that it would be a waste of time to enter into any extensive discussion with regard to their merits. The former display much humour and much playful wit, and lash the vices and follies of the age with great keenness, yet with so much ease, pleasantry, and apparent good nature, that the object censured is almost disarmed of re-

sentment, and even relaxed into a smile. The latter, however, are my favourites: in the epistles the utmost elegance and sweetness, the most alluring philosophy, and a vein of criticism, highly interesting and instructive, are combined; to these are added various traits of the author's life: his heart and feelings are frequently laid open to us, and we pay homage to his friendships, his candour, and sincerity. He is infinitely more pure, correct, and Attic, than his predecessor, observes Quintilian; and, from what we can gather of the opinions of Lucilius, his philosophy and feelings were likewise infinitely more generous and social.

Persius wrote his satires during the reign of Nero, and even ventured to censure the bombastic composition of that Emperor. Though but six in number, they have acquired for him an immortality. "Multum et veræ gloriæ, quamvis uno libro, Persius meruit."* "Persius has acquired much genuine glory, though but the author of a single book." He has been taxed with harshness and obscurity, though probably without foundation. His contemporaries perused him, it is said, with eagerness and pleasure; his various allusions, therefore, to characters, foibles, or extravagances, not familiar to us, are probably the true cause of the difficulties which now occur to the critical reader. His morality, religion, and philosophy, however, are of so exalted a kind as fully to atone for the inelegance of his composition, and very ade-

* Quintilian

quately to compensate the trouble of explaining him. It was the opinion of the celebrated Mr. Harris of Salisbury, that "he was the only difficult Latin author that would reward the reader for the pains which he must take to understand him." Dryden has translated this poet in a careless manner, but with his wonted vivacity and spirit. Dr. Brewster has succeeded better, and has impressed upon his version, which is correct and energetic, much of the style and manner of his original. Very lately another attempt has been made by Mr. Drummond, and not without considerable success; he is more elegant, but more verbose than Brewster; more pleasing, perhaps, to the English reader, though partaking less of the peculiar character of Persius. His preface is extremely interesting, and does honour to his learning and taste. A very good edition of this poet has been given us by Casaubon.

When Quintilian, at the conclusion of the paragraph on satire, observes "*Sunt clari hodieque*," he manifestly alludes to JUVENAL, who was his pupil, and who at the time the Institutes were given to the Roman world had written several of his satires. It must have been with much complacency and delight that the venerable critic contemplated the genius and moral integrity of his former disciple and friend. Sixteen of the satires of Juvenal are extant, and are deservedly celebrated for a lofty and fervid strain of poetry, and for the warm and indignant style in which he scourges the crimes and vices of his age. In exposing,

however, the enormities of the licentious and debauched, he has laid open scenes which had better have been concealed, and made use of expressions gross and indecent in the extreme. On this account he cannot with safety be placed in the hands of youth, unless under the form of an *editio expurgata*. Juvenal has been translated by Dryden: but the mere English reader will derive the best conception of the manner of this noble satirist from the admirable imitations of Dr. Johnson, which are beyond all praise. Mr. Murphy and Mr. Lewis have likewise lately published imitations of this poet which possess much merit, though certainly far inferior to the spirited productions of Johnson. Juvenal was in high estimation during the middle ages, and is cited by Peter of Blois, Vicentius Bellovacensis, and other authors of the same period, who frequently apply to him the term *Ethicus*. Juvenal was first printed at Rome in 1474. *

Terentius Varro, the most learned of the Romans, copied the ancient plan of writing satire, and the *Menippeæ* therefore of this author, according to Quintilian, exhibited a great variety of different metres. The erudition of Varro was so great, that, though he was the author of no less than five hundred treatises, they were allowed to be complete in their kind,

* The present century has already produced two such excellent translations of this satirical poet, that it is a very difficult task to adjudge the palm of superiority. Mr. Gifford's appeared in 1802, nervous, spirited, and faithful; nor has Mr. Hodgson's, which followed in 1808, a less valid claim to similar epithets.

and abounding in information. "Plurimos libros et *doctissimos* composuit," observes our critic; and St. Augustin declares, that it is a subject of admiration how Varro, who digested such a vast variety of books, could find leisure to compose so many volumes, and how he who composed so many volumes, could peruse such a multitude of books, and acquire, too, such profound and almost unexampled erudition. Of the five hundred volumes of Varro all have perished, except one treatise, *De Re Rustica*, and another, *De Lingua Latina*; the latter is dedicated to Cicero, who was the friend of our author, and a great admirer of his literary labours.

No. XXXVII.

—Oft the gloomy north, with iron swarms
Tempestuous pouring from her frozen caves,
Blasted th' Italian shore, and swept the works
Of liberty and wisdom down the gulph
Of all-devouring night. AKENSIDE.

WE now proceed with our critic to consider the Roman writers of Iambic verse, who, however, never confined themselves entirely to this measure, but usually mingled it with lines of a different metre. Of CATULLUS, who excelled in this department, I have treated so much at large in my twenty-sixth number, that very little can be required of me in this place. His poems, some of which are lost, may be divided into heroic, lyric, elegiac, and epigrammatic compositions, and of these there were numerous imitators during the most flourishing period of the Empire. We learn from Pliny the Younger that Sentius Augurinus was peculiarly successful in copying the Veronese bard; he addressed a beautiful little complimentary poem to Pliny, which in its commencement elegantly alludes to Catullus and his friend Calvus.

Sweetly flow my tender lays,
Like Calvus' or *Catullus'* strains,
Bards approv'd of ancient days!
Where love in all its softness reigns.
MELMOTH.

It is somewhat singular that Quintilian, though he has repeatedly mentioned Calvus as an orator, has never introduced him as a poet, notwithstanding he was so celebrated in this character by his contemporaries, and by succeeding writers. Pliny, in lib. i. epist. 16., when speaking of the genius of his friend Pompeius Saturninus, remarks, that "he has composed several poetical pieces in the manner of *Calvus* and Catullus. What strokes of wit, what sweetness of numbers, what pointed satire, and what touches of the tender passion appear in his verses! in the midst of which he sometimes designedly falls into an agreeable negligence in his metre, in the manner, too, of *those admired poets.*" * The best edition of Catullus is by Antonius Vulpius, published at Padua, in 1737, in quarto.

BIBACULUS, who was contemporary with Cicero, wrote annals in iambic verse, and a variety of epigrams, and some lyric poems. He was ranked with Catullus, whom he imitated, and whose peculiar diction and occasional severity he adopted with success. No particle of the poetry of Bibaculus has reached us.

We have now to consider HORACE as a *lyric*

* Melmoth's Translation.

poet, the first and almost only bard in this province of Roman literature that deserves attention. As, however, in various parts of the Literary Hours I have given my opinion of the peculiar beauties and defects of his lyric productions, there will be the less occasion in the present essay to enter into any extensive discussion. Sweetness, grace, and a singular felicity of phrase, form the grand characteristics of his style. It is this *curiosa felicitas*, this *happiness of expression*, which is so essential, so vital as it were to lyric poetry, and which renders it, perhaps, the most difficult department of the Muses. To attain a splendid, perspicuous, and expressive lyric diction, has been the lot of few, and requires unwearied attention, in the choice of words and idiom, and much labour with regard to the beauty of their arrangement. It is these requisites being not transferable, which occasion the odes of Horace, when translated, to appear in general so insufferably flat and tasteless. Rome, it may be remarked, could boast of but one genuine lyric poet: with pride and pleasure, therefore, we may point to a Collins, a Gray, and a Mason!

There are some imitations, however, which convey a nearly just idea of the Horatian manner; I need only mention two, by way of example, of the same ode, viz. Lib. ii. od. 16. "Otium Divos rogat," &c. by Mr. Hastings and Mr. Gifford. The edition of this poet by Gesner, as lately improved and published by Zeunius, and the foundation of which was laid

by the judicious Baxter, may probably be considered as the best.

Cæsius Bassus, a lyric poet in the reign of Nero, was an imitator of Horace, but fell far short of his model. He is mentioned by Quintilian, who was acquainted with him, with much indifference, and he closes the paragraph by observing that many poets now living are greatly superior to him. Not a line, I believe, of Bassus is extant.

The Tragic poets of Rome form the next subject of criticism; and pursuing the nomenclature of Quintilian, which follows no chronological order, I have to introduce the name of Accius, who, considering the age he lived in, B. C. 170, was possessed of great merit and genius. His style was vigorous, and, occasionally, sublime, yet crude and unpolished: he is complimented by Horace with the term *altus*, and by Ovid with that of *animosus*. To Pacuvius, who was fifty years older than himself, he is said to have read one of his tragedies, which the old bard in general approved of, though he made some objections to the style, which he called harsh and unfinished. Accius took most of his fables from the Greek theatre, and more particularly from Sophocles; yet he is known to have composed one national tragedy on the story of Brutus and Tarquin. Some comedies and historical annals in verse are attributed to this poet, but all his productions have perished. Decimus Brutus was his patron and friend.

Pacuvius, equally celebrated as a painter and as a poet, wrote several satires and trage-

dies, some of which were highly admired, especially his *Orestes*, notwithstanding their roughness and inelegance of style. Cicero, who like Virgil was a lover of antiquity, had a high opinion of this author, and remarks, "omnes apud hunc *ornatos* elaboratosque esse versus *;" and Horace thus notices him and his contemporary Accius.

——————————— aufert
Pacuvius docti famam senis, Accius alti.
Lib. ii. epist. i.

We judge, among the bards of elder time,
Pacuvius learned, Accius most sublime.
BOSCAWEN.

Of Pacuvius only a few fragments remain.

We are compelled to entertain a very high opinion of the tragic powers of VARIUS, and at the same time to lament our loss, when Quintilian asserts that the *Thyestes* of Varius may be put in competition with any production of the Grecian Drama; "Varii Thyestes cuilibet Græcorum comparari potest." He was the intimate friend of Virgil and Horace, and their companion in the celebrated journey to Brundusium: he introduced the latter to Mecænas, and was chosen by Augustus to revise, with other literati, the Æneid of Virgil: indeed, previous to the production of the Mantuan bard, he was esteemed the first epic writer of Rome, having written an heroic poem, or panegyric on

* De Oratore.

Augustus. Of this once highly-estimated poet nothing now is extant which can afford a fair specimen of his powers.

Literature has sustained a considerable deprivation in the destruction of the poetry of POMPONIUS SECUNDUS, who, of all the Roman writers, says the author of the Institutes, has succeeded best in tragedy; and though the preceding generation thought him deficient, he continues to observe, in pathos, yet they acknowledged he was eminent in erudition, in elegance, and in art. He had probably strictly adhered to the judicious advice of Horace.

Si quid inexpertum scenæ committis et audes
Personam formare novam; servetur ad imum
Qualis ab incœpto processerit, et sibi constet.
De Arte Poetica.

Of these celebrated lines I have seen no translation which has given me satisfaction; I shall attempt, therefore, one myself, conscious that should I fail I shall not want companions of established reputation to sympathize with me.

But should you, boldly venturing, bring to view
The lov'd original your fancy drew,
True to itself, and one, and well combin'd,
Weave the warm fiction of the master-mind.

In comedy the Romans have in vain attempted to equal their Grecian models. PLAUTUS, though possessing humour and wit, and writing with purity and elegance of style, insomuch that Varro has asserted that the Muses, if they had

chosen to speak Latin, would have adopted the language of Plautus, is yet inferior to Aristophanes. The merit of Plautus is, notwithstanding, great, and no stronger proof can be given of it than that for five hundred years he was a favourite at Rome, although the language of his country had become, during that period, much more polished and correct, and criticism and elegant literature had made very rapid strides. His drama is varied and interesting, and his characters boldly conceived and well drawn. The principal faults of Plautus are coarseness of wit, and obscenity; in these he resembles Aristophanes, though Epicharmus, it is said, was the model he chiefly followed;

Plautus ad exemplar Siculi properare Epicharmi.
HOR. Lib. ii. ep. i.

Our bard was held in no great estimation by Horace, who has repeatedly blamed both his style and manner. Of twenty-five comedies which Plautus composed, nineteen are extant, a good edition of which has been given us by Operarius, in two volumes quarto. Plautus was known in the darkest period of Europe, for his comedies are among the royal manuscripts written in the tenth century. The translation of this poet by Thornton and Warner may be recommended for its ease and fidelity.

CÆCILIUS, observes the author of the Institutes, has had lavish praise bestowed upon him by antiquity; and from Horace we learn

that he was highly esteemed for the force and energy of his Muse;

Vincere Cæcilius gravitate. Lib. ii. ep. i.

With greatest force Cæcilius strikes the heart.
BOSCAWEN.

Yet Cicero, in one of his Epistles to Atticus, terms him "Malum Latinitatis auctorem." Cæcilius, who died a year after Ennius, wrote more than thirty comedies, the titles of which are alone preserved.

TERENTIUS, the contemporary of Lucilius the poet and Polybius the historian, was the intimate friend of Scipio and of Lelius, and has clearly shewn to what purity, simplicity, and elegance the Latin language may attain. His comedies possess that species of humour which, though scarcely exciting a smile, pleases the more it is studied and contemplated; it, in some measure, resembles what we are so delighted with in the pages of Addison. Terence had ever Menander before his eyes; and the six comedies we now possess, with the exception, perhaps, of the simple and beautiful *Hecyra*, are but the remnant of one hundred and eight which he is recorded to have translated from the Grecian poet. The delicacy of his sentiments, his exquisite taste in expression and arrangement, and his faithful delineation of life and manners, have rendered him the favourite of every elegant scholar, though he wants the originality, the spirit, and interest of Plautus. Quintilian, after paying a due en-

comium to the elegance of this poet, has remarked that he would have been much more pleasing and graceful, had he confined his verses to trimeter iambics, instead of using iambics of every different measure.

There are two famous manuscripts of Terence in the Vatican; one of which, it is reported, was written by the command of Charlemagne, and compared with the more ancient copies by Calispius Scholasticus. * Bentley's edition of Terence is one of the most valuable; and we possess an admirable translation in familiar blank verse by Colman, and which in many parts has done ample justice to the original.

AFRANIUS built his comedies upon the manners and customs of his countrymen, and they were thence called *Togatæ comediæ*, whilst those which were founded on Grecian history and costume, were termed *Palliatæ*. Cicero has praised him for acuteness of intellect, and facility of style; but Quintilian, though he gives him credit for great comic abilities, reprobates his partiality for vicious intrigue and laxity of moral. Horace, in a well-known line, considers him as an imitator of Menander.

Dicitur *Afrani* toga convenisse Menandro.
Lib. ii. ep. i.

Afranius' robe would great Menander fit,
So strong the likeness to his style and wit.
BOSCAWEN.

* See Warton, on the Introduction of Learning into Europe.

It is mentioned by Suetonius that in one of the comedies of Afranius, entitled "the Conflagration," the pillage of the house set on fire during the performance was given to the actors. All the works of this poet are lost.

Though the Latin writers of comedy we have now enumerated certainly possess a considerable portion of genius and humour, they must nevertheless hide their diminished heads when thrown into comparison with their Grecian prototypes; this the candour of Quintilian has acknowledged, and in the following emphatic terms:

"Vix levem consequimur umbram, adeo ut mihi sermo ipse Romanus non recipere videatur illam solis concessam Atticis venerem, quando eam ne Græci quidem in alio genere linguæ obtinuerint."

"Scarce can we form a faint shadow of the Grecian comedy, for the Latin appears to me not capable of expressing those graces which so much distinguish the Attic dialect; and it is remarkable that the Greeks themselves no longer retain these beautiful peculiarities when composing in another language."

In history, however, the Genius of Rome has taken a sublime and, perhaps, unequalled flight, soaring beyond even the bold and daring pinion of Greece. SALLUST, the Roman Thucydides, has excelled his model; for, equally concise, energetic, and perspicuous, his sentences are less broken, less harsh, and more elegantly constructed, than those of the Grecian historian. No author is superior in the delineation of cha-

racter; he has seized the delicate shades as well as the prominent features, and clothed them in the most rich and appropriate colouring. The pictures of Cæsar, Cato, Jugurtha, and Bocchus, disclose the hand of a master, and glow with life and beauty. As an orator, too, Sallust is scarcely less conspicuous, his speeches being strongly characteristic, and displaying all the vivacity, strength, and immortal conciseness of their author. The conspiracy of Catiline, and the Jugurthine war, abound likewise in description of the most vivid and picturesque kind: the capture of Cirta by Marius may be mentioned as a striking instance of his talents in this department. His Roman history from the death of Sylla to the conspiracy of Catiline, the work upon which his reputation among the ancients was chiefly founded, has most unfortunately, as a whole, perished; yet so numerous are the fragments of this production, that the late learned De Brosses attempted the restoration, and a translation of the entire history in five books. "He undertook the laborious task," observes a periodical critic, "of collecting the fragments of this work from the ancient Grammarians, and at last saw his diligence rewarded by a collection of more than seven hundred fragments, which he combined with so much judgment and ability, as to produce a beautiful whole, graced with the genuine spirit and energy of the noble Roman. The work was published in 1777, at Dijon, in three quartos, under the title 'Histoire de la Re-

publique Romaine dans le Cours du viiᵐᵉ Siecle, par Sallust,' " &c.*

A very good edition of Sallust has been lately published by Henry Homer: but no translation of this author of any value exists in our language; those of Gordon and of Rose bearing little or no resemblance to the style and manner of their original.†

The injury which literature has sustained by the destruction of the decades of Livy, has probably never been surpassed! Of this inimitable historian but thirty-five books out of one hundred and forty remain, and by far the most interesting and valuable portion has perished. So late as A. D. 1431, the first five books of the fifth decade were discovered at Worms, and even an entire copy of the original is said to have been extant in the year 1631, and to have been destroyed in the plunder of Magdeburgh! Nothing can be more perspicuous, more majestic and dignified, than the style of Livy; nothing more vivacious, spirited, and eloquent, than his harangues; and such are the liveliness and splendour of his imagination, that no historian has hitherto equalled the magnificence, the animation, and interest, of his

* Monthly Magazine, vol. viii. p. 1085.

† A translation of this historian, in 2 vols. 4to., by Dr. Henry Stewart, 1806; and one by Mr. Murphy, a posthumous publication, in 1807, in 8vo., it is now necessary to notice. The former, though elegant, and not unfaithful as to matter, is too laboured and diffuse in its style; while the latter, if occasionally somewhat relaxed, is, upon the whole, more rapid and concise, and consequently more approximated to the manner of its original.

descriptions and narrations. As to the expression of the passions, says the author of the Institutes, particularly those of a tender kind, no writer of history, to speak in the most moderate terms, has drawn them in more faithful and natural colours. In short, it may be truly said, that in reading Livy you experience sensations similar to those you derive from the perusal of Homer. The following just and exquisitely finished character of Livy, not less admirable for its truth than for its harmony and imagery, merits every encomium.

Of mightier spirit, of majestic frame,
With powers proportioned to the Roman fame,
When Rome's fierce Eagle his broad wings unfurl'd,
And shadow'd with his plumes the subject world,
In bright pre-eminence, that Greece might own,
Sublimer Livy claims the Historic throne;
With that rich eloquence, whose golden light
Brings the full scene distinctly to the sight;
That zeal for Truth, which interest cannot bend,
That fire which Freedom ever gives her friend,
Immortal artist of a work supreme!
Delighted Rome beheld, with proud esteem,
Her own bright image, of Colossal size,
From thy long toils in purest marble rise;
But envious Time, with a malignant stroke,
This sacred statue into fragments broke;
In Lethe's stream its nobler portion sunk,
And left Futurity the wounded trunk.
Yet, like the matchless, mutilated frame,
To which great *Angelo* bequeath'd his name,
This glorious ruin, in whose strength we find
The splendid vigour of the Sculptor's mind,

In the fond eye of Admiration still
Rivals the finish'd forms of modern skill.

HAYLEY.

So great was the reputation of Livy, that Pliny, in one of his epistles, has related that an inhabitant of the city of Cadiz was so struck with his illustrious character, that he travelled to Rome purposely to see the historian, and, having satisfied his curiosity, immediately returned home *, supposing, probably, that, after seeing Livy, no other object was worthy his attention. Alphonso, King of Naples, expressed his admiration in a manner still more singular; having, in 1451, sent an ambassador to the Venetian states, where the bones of Livy had lately been discovered, to request that one of them might be spared him. An arm-bone was accordingly sent, and this curious present is mentioned in an inscription still existing at Padua. When Petrarch took up his residence in this city, in the year 1351, he was lodged in the cloisters of St. Justine, adjoining the church of the monastery, which church was founded on the ruins of an ancient temple of Concord. Some workmen, employed in digging in the place, discovered a stone, on which was legible an inscription to the memory of Livy. A circumstance of this kind excited in Petrarch, who almost adored this author, a high degree of enthusiasm, and he conceived the fanciful idea of addressing a letter to the historian. As a

* Lib. ii. p. 3.

curiosity, and as disclosing the veneration of this celebrated character for Livy, I shall insert the epistle.

"I wish I had lived in your age, or rather that you had been born in mine. I should have been among those who went to seek you at Rome, or even in the Indies, had you dwelt there. I can now only behold you in your books; and in them but in part, from the indolence of our age, who have never taken any pains to collect your works. I cannot reflect on this without feeling indignation at my countrymen, who seek after nothing but gold, silver, and the pleasures of sense.

"I am under great obligations to you, because you bring me into so much good company. When I read your works, I think I live with Brutus, Regulus, Scipio, the Fabricii, the Camilli; and not with the banditti among whom my unfortunate stars have placed me. Salute on my part among the ancients, Polybius, Quintus, Claudius, Valerius, and Antius, whose glory was clouded by yours; among the moderns, Pliny the Younger, your neighbour, and Crispus Sallust, your rival; and inform them they have not been more fortunate than you, with respect to the preservation of their works.

"I write this in the city where you were born, and interred, in the vestibule of St. Justine the virgin, and on the stone of your monument." *

* Life of Petrarch, vol. ii. p. 58.

Some philosophical dialogues and essays, and a very instructive letter addressed to his son, on the merits of a variety of authors, and which Quintilian has repeatedly noticed with praise, were also written by this great historian. Good and correct editions of Livy have been published by Gronovius, Drakenborch, Crevier, Ruddiman, and Homer. There is a translation also by Baker, which, though possessing merit, conveys not an adequate idea of the sublime original; it is not indeed within the sphere of probability that a version should ever be published which can satisfy an admirer of Livy.

To SERVILIUS NOVIANUS Quintilian was a pupil, and the critic has recorded him as an historian of great merit and reputation. He terms him sententious, but at the same time observes that he was not sufficiently dense and compact for the dignity of history. All his writings are lost.

BASSUS AUFIDIUS wrote on the Germanic war, and had high claims to the character of a judicious historian. He is valuable in all respects, says Quintilian, yet he sometimes sinks beneath what he was capable of effecting. Nothing of this author is extant.

We have now arrived at a paragraph in the Institutes which evidently alludes to the great historian TACITUS, the contemporary and friend of Quintilian, and whose writings, as hath been justly remarked by Gibbon, will instruct the last generations of mankind.*

* Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, vol. ii. p. 6.

"Superest adhuc, et exornat ætatis nostræ gloriam, vir sæculorum memoriâ dignus, qui olim nominabitur, nunc intelligitur. Habet amatores, nec imitatores: ut libertas, quanquam circumcisis quæ dixisset, ei nocuerit. Sed elatum abundè spiritum et audaces sententias deprehendas etiam in iis quæ manent."

"There yet remains to us an historian worthy of being held in remembrance through distant ages; the glory, the ornament of the present period, whose name, though now but conjectured, will be dear and familiar to posterity. His admirers are many, but his imitators few: for the love of truth, although many things have been withdrawn which he had written, has yet been prejudicial to him. In what we possess, however, of his productions you discern an elevated and sublime spirit, and a bold originality of thought."

Such is the just and noble encomium of the Roman critic on this immortal writer, whose compositions, though mutilated by the hand of Time, present us with the first, and, perhaps, the best specimen of philosophy in union with historical genius. In Tacitus, the secret motives of action, the causes of events, revolutions, conspiracies, and political manœuvres, are traced from their very source, with a profundity and acuteness it is in vain to seek for in any other ancient historian. The love of liberty, of moral virtue, and of national independence, a fixed hatred of tyranny and oppression, were deeply impressed on the soul of Tacitus; when recording, therefore, the reigns of a Tiberius, a Caius,

a Claudius, and a Nero, his language, though nervous and forcible to a degree unparalleled, almost fails him in depicting the dreadful vices of these tyrants, and his own extreme detestation of them.

> His Roman voice, in base degenerate days,
> Spoke to Imperial Pride in Freedom's praise;
> And with indignant hate, severely warm,
> Shaw'd to gigantic Guilt his ghastly form.
>
> HAYLEY

Notwithstanding the severe and sarcastic style of Tacitus in the province of history, no individual perhaps ever cultivated with greater sensibility the delights of love and friendship. With his amiable wife, the daughter of the great and virtuous Agricola, he lived in uninterrupted domestic happiness to a very advanced age. His admiration and esteem for his father-in-law are strongly apparent in the biographical detail he has given of this illustrious chief, which, for its elegance, its purity, its pathos and simplicity, it is impossible too highly to value: it may safely be pronounced, indeed, the most beautiful and finished piece of biography ever published. The friendship of Pliny and Tacitus has become proverbial; alike lovers of literature and of all the pleasing and polished graces of life; alike inspired with sentiments of unsullied truth and honour, they found in each other, with little exception, a conformity of principles and opinions; and such was the delicate deference of Tacitus to his friend, that he

would not engage in the composition of history until Pliny, whose abilities for the undertaking he was well acquainted with, had declined the task.

The treatise "De Situ, Moribus, et Populis Germaniæ," is another proof of the descriptive and philosophical powers of this author. Its accuracy, fidelity, and information, have rendered it truly useful and precious to succeeding historians, who have derived abundant instruction and food for speculation from its perusal. Gilbert Stuart's "View of Society in Europe" may be termed a very ingenious comment on this part of Tacitus. The elegant and judicious essay "De causis corruptæ eloquentiæ" has been attributed to our historian, though perhaps upon insufficient grounds. Quintilian appears to have a better claim to it, the style being very similar to that of the Institutes. It must ever be a subject of bitter regret, that, of the thirty books into which the historical compositions of Tacitus were sometimes divided, but sixteen of his Annals, and five of his History, remain. The most valuable part of Tacitus was preserved in a single manuscript, and discovered in a Monastery of Westphalia*; and Lipsius affirms, that five hundred pieces of gold were presented to the monks of a convent in Saxony, by Leo the Tenth, for the five first books of the Annals of this author. When Beroaldus published his edition of Tacitus in 1515, there was printed at the end of it the following edict,

* Bayle, Dictionnaire, art. Tacite.

which places the solicitude of Leo for the collection and preservation of ancient manuscripts in a striking light, "Nomine Leonis X. proposita sunt præmia non mediocria his qui ad eum libros veteres neque hactenus editos adtulerint." *

The best editions of this instructive writer are by Brotier and Homer. A most elegant and faithful translation of the treatise on Germany, and of the Life of Agricola, has been published by Dr. Aikin; and an entire version of all his works, in four volumes quarto, has since been given to the public by Mr. Murphy. This elaborate undertaking certainly deserves much praise, yet has the conciseness and terseness of the original, in a great measure, escaped the translator.

The criticism of Quintilian on the Roman orators opens with a comparison between CICERO and Demosthenes, and which is, probably, the noblest passage in the Institutions. Were it not too long for the limits of my paper, I should be tempted to insert the whole as one of the first ornaments I could select; the more striking portions of it, however, I shall speedily quote for the gratification of myself and my reader. "Johnson's comparison of Dryden and Pope," says Wakefield, "seems grounded upon that of Quintilian between Demosthenes and Cicero. What the great rhetorician has said upon those celebrated orators, and Dr. Johnson's estimate of the several merits of our

* Warton on the Introduction of Learning into Europe, note.

two noble poets, I look upon as the finest specimens of elegant composition, and critical acuteness, in the world."* Pursuing the arrangement of Quintilian, I must consider Cicero, in this place, merely as an orator and as an epistolary writer; his philosophical and critical works will be noticed hereafter.

With regard to design, invention, and the disposition of materials, Demosthenes and Cicero are nearly upon a level; but in their mode of eloquence there is much disparity. With the text, however, of the judicious rhetorician before me, I might justly be taxed with presumption, were I, on this particular branch of my subject, to use other words than his own. Thus beautifully has he contrasted the genius of the two orators.

"In eloquendo est aliqua diversitas: densior ille, hic copiosior: ille concludit astrictiùs, hic latiùs pugnat: ille acumine semper, hic frequenter et pondere: illi nihil detrahi potest, huic nihil adjici: curæ plus in illo, in hoc naturæ."

"In their mode of eloquence there is some difference: the one is more dense, the other more copious: this closes with the enemy, that allows him room to engage: the one is always acute, the other frequently so and excelling in dignity: from the one nothing can be withdrawn: to the other nothing can be added: in this there is more of elaboration, in that of nature."

* Note upon Gray, p. 91.

In exciting pity, Cicero was superior to Demosthenes, and appears to have combined in his character the energy of the Grecian orator, the copiousness of Plato, and the suavity of Isocrates. Not that he was, in any respect, a mere imitator.

"Non enim pluvias (ut ait Pindarus) aquas colligit, sed vivo gurgite exundat, dono quodam Providentiæ genitus, in quo totas vires suas Eloquentia experiretur."

"For he recollects not (as Pindar says) the waters of heaven, but flows from himself as from a living fountain, created, as it were, by the gift of Providence, that through him Eloquence might exert the whole of her immortal powers."

If inferior to Demosthenes in fire, vehemence, and compression; in harmony, beauty, and perspicuity, he is greatly superior; and, independent of the melodious and enchanting flow of his periods, there is a happy ease in his manner, unattainable but by great and singular genius: once more, therefore, adopting the language of the eloquent rhetorician, who has excelled himself in delineating the mental character of Cicero, we may, without fear of contradiction, say,

"Quare non immeritò ab hominibus ætatis suæ regnare in judiciis dictus est: apud posteros verò id consecutus, ut Cicero jam non hominis, sed eloquentiæ nomen habeatur. Hunc igitur spectemus: hoc propositum sit nobis exemplum. Ille se profecisse sciat, cui Cicero valde placebit."

"Justly, therefore, was he considered by his contemporaries as supreme in the courts of oratory, and already with posterity has he obtained such honour, that the name of Cicero is not merely that of a man, it is the name of eloquence itself: let him therefore be our companion and our model, and let the student be assured of his progress in elocution, to whom the productions of Cicero are dear."

The epistles of the Roman orator are written with great ease and purity, and abound with information literary, philosophical, domestic, and political: they may be deemed, indeed, the best specimens of epistolary composition which the world has afforded us; and it is peculiarly fortunate for the republic of letters, that so great a number has been preserved. Mr. Melmoth has translated many of these letters with his usual elegance and felicity; the original of which, and of the Orations, will be found accurately given in the editions of Gronovius, Ernestus, Olivetus, and the Oxford edition in quarto.

No. XXXVIII.

Selected shelves shall claim thy studious hours;
There shall thy ranging mind be fed on flowers!
There, while the shaded lamp's mild lustre streams,
Read ancient books, or woo inspiring dreams;
And, when a sage's bust arrests thee there,
Pause, and his features with his thoughts compare.
— Ah, most that Art my grateful rapture calls,
Which breathes a soul into the silent walls;
Which gathers round the Wise of every Tongue,
All on whose words departed nations hung;
Still prompt to charm with many a converse sweet;
Guides in the world, companions in retreat!

ROGERS.

THE orator who next claims our attention is ASINIUS POLLIO, the patron of Virgil and Horace, to whose poetical abilities he is indebted for immortality. He was celebrated as a general, a poet, an historian, and an orator; and in the latter capacity was thought to possess great accuracy in arrangement, and much spirit and invention in design; but so deficient was he in amenity and purity of style, that he appeared from his composition to have existed an age anterior to Cicero. He was the first who erected a Public Library at Rome, an example which was afterwards laudably copied by many

of the emperors. Beside his orations he was the author of several tragedies of no inconsiderable merit, and of a history of the civil wars, in seventeen books. Horace, in book the second, ode the first, has recommended him to pursue the study of history, and to desert for a time the tragic Muse; under an idea that he was employed upon too many important objects at once; in doing this he pays him in his own characteristic manner a high compliment.

Paulùm severæ Musa Tragediæ
Desit theatris: mox, ubi publicas
Res ordinàris, grande munus
Cecropio repetes cothurno,
Insigne mœstis præsidium reis,
Et consulenti, *Pollio*, curiæ:
Cui laurus æternos honores
Dalmatico peperit triumpho.

Quit then the tragic Muse awhile;
In these more public cares engage:
Soon shall thy chaste Athenian style
Again adorn the Roman stage.

Great *Pollio!* thou whose talents shield
Wrong'd innocence, the senate guide;
Who fierce Dalmatia taught to yield,
Rais'd to bright glory's laurell'd pride.

Boscawen.

Virgil has paid him equal if not superior praise, in his third and fourth eclogues; and Varro, Cæsar, and Cicero were his friends, and the admirers of his literary powers. His writ-

ings, with the exception of a few letters to the latter, are lost.

Messala, as an orator, was easy and polished in his style, and in his manner graceful and noble, yet inferior to many of his contemporaries in point of energy and strength. He was beloved by Horace, who mentions him, in conjunction with Pollio, as his particular friend;

> ——————— te dicere possum
> Pollio; te, *Messala*, tuo cum fratre.
> Lib. i. Sat. x.

The orations of Messala have not reached us.

No orator, perhaps, had he chosen to cultivate the art with assiduity, could have approached so near the excellence of Cicero as Caius Cæsar.* He was a great master of the niceties and peculiar beauties of the Roman language, and wrote some books upon its structure and analogy. His elocution was keen, vehement and persuasive, and he appeared, as Quintilian observes, to speak with the same vigour and spirit as he fought. His orations and treatises have perished, but his commentaries have earned for him the meed of immortality.

Celius was an orator of considerable genius, and possessed a peculiar urbanity in his mode

* It is singular that the Commentaries of this author have been omitted by Quintilian: celebrated as they are for modesty and impartiality, for purity, elegance and chastity of style, they loudly demanded, not only notice, but praise.

of opening an accusation. He was the disciple of Cicero, who defended him when accused of being a member of the Catilinian conspiracy. He died young, and nothing of his writings is left us.

CALVUS, the friend of Catullus, and whom we have already mentioned with approbation as a poet, was still more illustrious as an orator, many of the Romans preferring him to any of his competitors. He was accurate, pure and dignified in his language and manner, and in his taste for composition he was deemed Attic. Catullus has written an exquisite little poem on his mistress Quintilia, and, in the commencement of his fourteenth carmen, a piece of elegant pleasantry and humour, thus emphatically expresses his regard:

> Ni te plùs oculis meis amarem,
> Jucundissime *Calve*, munere isto
> Odissem te odio Vatiniano.
>
> Did I not, pleasant Calvus, prize
> Thy friendship dearer than mine eyes,
> For that same present brought me late,
> I'd hate thee with Vatinian hate.
>
> Translation of 1795.

Calvus had sent his friend, during the *Saturnalia*, as a present, a collection of bad poets. It is a subject of regret that the productions of Calvus are no longer in existence.

Of SERVIUS SULPITIUS, to whom the senate and people of Rome, at the solicitation of Cicero, erected a statue, little is known. That

he was an orator, however, of high reputation, is evident from an observation of Quintilian, who remarks that he merited the great fame which he obtained in consequence of three orations.

The sarcastic wit and bitter raillery of CASSIUS SEVERUS at length condemned him to the island of Crete, where he was banished seventeen years by Augustus, for the gross illiberality of his language. Had he made use of more delicate colouring, and thrown more dignity into his style, it is the opinion of the author of the Institutions, that he might have been classed among the first orators of Rome. All his works are lost.

DOMITIUS AFER had the honour of being preceptor to Quintilian, and was remarkable for the elegant and pleasing strain of his elocution, and for the keenness of his wit, and the solidity of his judgment; but all his talents were eclipsed by a mean spirit of adulation, and still further disgraced by his turning informer under the infamous Tiberius and his successors. He wrote two valuable books on oratory, but rendered himself an object of ridicule by pleading when his faculties were injured by old age. His compositions have perished.

JULIUS AFRICANUS exhibited more spirit and fire in his orations than did Afer; but his diction was too metaphorical, observes the critic: he was too fastidious in the choice of his words; and his audience was sometimes

exhausted by the length of his harangues. No remains of Africanus exist.

A strong and fine-toned voice, a clear enunciation, and a figure so noble and commanding, that it might excite admiration even on a theatre, were some of the characteristics of TRACHALLUS; to these were added a beautiful set of features, eyes that seemed to lighten, and gestures full of majesty and grace. His language, too, was sublime, simple, and perspicuous, and to attain to absolute perfection in his art was ever the object of his ambition. His orations are, most unfortunately, lost.

The diction and manner of VIBIUS CRISPUS were truly pleasing, and his style was peculiarly succinct and eloquent; yet he excelled more in the management of private than of public affairs. Of his writings nothing is extant.

JULIUS SECUNDUS, prematurely snatched from further improvement by the hand of Death, had made great progress toward perfection, and had a claim to high rank among the orators of his age. His style, according to Quintilian, had much sweetness, perspicuity, and beauty, and in his mode of explanation he was singularly fascinating. Few were superior to him in propriety of expression, and he possessed the rare talent of hazarding with felicity phrases the most bold and daring, "the words that burn." Time has deprived us of all his compositions.

The following passage of our rhetorician evidently includes, and hints at, the illustrious PLINY, who was the most faithful and valuable

of his friends, and, if report say true, liberally supported him when in a state of indigence.

"Habebunt qui post nos de oratoribus scribent, magnam eos qui nunc vigent materiam verè laudandi. Sunt enim summa hodie, quibus illustratur forum, ingenia. Namque et consummati jam patroni veteribus æmulantur, et eos juvenum ad optima tendentium imitatur ac sequitur industria."

"Those who shall after us criticise the orators of the present and succeeding age, will have an ample theme for praise; for there exist now Romans of great genius who are the first ornaments of the bar. We possess even some veteran orators, who rival the ancients, and whose merit our eloquent youth imitate, and follow with an industry truly laudable."

I have thus an opportunity of introducing one of the most amiable and accomplished characters of antiquity. The abilities and the opulence of Pliny were ever employed to support the worthy and to relieve the necessitous, to punish the vicious and to protect the innocent. As a magistrate, a father, a husband, and a friend, his conduct was exemplary. The utmost sweetness of disposition, and all the elegant graces, were centered in his person, and he was beloved by his friends with an enthusiasm which was fully justified by his numerous virtues. The mutual friendship of Pliny and Tacitus is almost as celebrated as the loves of Petrarch and Laura. They were in the habit of sending to each other their respective works for correction. "How agreeable, how noble

is such a commerce!" exclaims Pliny; "and how am I pleased with the thought, that posterity, if it shall at all concern itself with us, will not cease to mention with what harmony, what freedom, what fidelity, we lived together! It will be an instance as remarkable, as it is uncommon, that two persons, nearly of the same age and rank, and of some character in the republic of letters, (for since I join myself with you, I am obliged to speak of your merit with reserve,) should thus mutually assist and promote each other's studies. — It is particularly agreeable to me therefore to find, that in all companies where learning is the topic of conversation, we are always mentioned together, and that my name immediately follows yours. It is true, there are some who prefer you to me, as others, on the contrary, give me the advantage; but I am little solicitous in what order we are placed, so that we stand together; for, in my estimation, whoever is next to you, must necessarily precede every one else. You even see in wills we are always equally considered, and that the legacies bequeathed to us are generally the same, both in number and value. Since, therefore, we are thus united by a similitude of studies, manners, reputation, and even by testamentary donations, those last instances of the world's good opinion, should not these circumstances tend to inflame us mutually with the most ardent affection?" *

As a literary character, Pliny stands high on

* Melmoth's Pliny, book vii. let. xx.

the rolls of fame; his *orations* were considered by his contemporaries as making a near approach to the excellence of Cicero, and were corrected for publication, and polished with the utmost assiduity and care. With the exception of the Panegyric on Trajan, which presents us with a very favourable specimen of his eloquence, we are altogether deprived of these beautiful productions. A little inflation in sentiment, and a little pomposity of style, may however be ascribed to Pliny from the single oration that time and barbarity have spared us.

Whether considered in a literary, a domestic, or a political light, the *letters* of Pliny are truly estimable. I know of no compositions so well calculated to excite in youth an enthusiastic taste for literature; it is scarce possible, I think, to read them without imbibing, not only a relish for classical pursuits, but a love of virtue, and a generous desire of true glory. Such is their exquisite refinement, such their interest and beauty, that with me they please the more, the more they are perused. Pliny is one of the few authors whose works have lost nothing by their transfusion. The translation of Mr. Melmoth, if not quite so concise as the original, yet gives a most pleasing and striking likeness of the accomplished Roman, and is written with great purity and elegance.

Pliny composed a history of his own age, of which Tacitus entertained a very high opinion: he was the author also of some very pleasing poems, over which, together with his history, Time has laid an impenetrable veil.

Cellarius and Veenhusius have published valuable editions of this classic, and Foulis of Glasgow has printed the text elegantly and correctly in a quarto volume.

In the department of Roman philosophy and criticism, to which we are now arrived, we must again, and in the first place, have recourse to the name of CICERO. Though renowned for a strain of eloquence almost unparalleled, his critical and philosophical works appear to me the most interesting and instructive. As a sage and moralist, his treatises *De Officiis*, *De Senectute*, *De Amicitia*, *De Natura Deorum*, *De Legibus*, *De Finibus*, &c. &c. display the whole body of the Grecian philosophy, improved by his own vast genius working upon materials of the utmost weight and importance. As a Critic, his Essays *De Claris Oratoribus*, *De Oratore*, *Orator ad Brutum*, &c. &c. evince a profound knowledge in literature as well as an accurate acquaintance with the principles of his own profession. It is to be lamented that a few of his most valuable productions, which were in existence in the fourteenth century, should have been lost through negligence, merely, and inattention. To Petrarch, a lover of literature and a most assiduous collector of manuscripts, we owe, singular as it may appear, the loss of two highly interesting compositions of this great master. "In 1325, Convenole, the preceptor of Petrarch, had given up his school, and dragged out a languishing life at Avignon, overwhelmed with age and poverty. Petrarch was the sole resource of this poor old man. He never failed

to succour him in his distress; and when he had no money, which was often the case, he carried his benevolence so far, as to lend him his books to pawn. This exquisite charity proved an irreparable loss to the republic of letters: for among these books were two rare manuscripts of Cicero, in which was his Treatise upon Glory. Petrarch asked him some time after where he had placed them, designing to redeem them himself. The old man, ashamed of what he had done, answered only with tears. Petrarch offered him money to recover them. "Ah!" replied he, "what an affront are you putting upon me!" Petrarch, to humour his delicacy, went no further. Some time after, Convenole went from Avignon to Prato, his native village, where he died: and the manuscripts could never be recovered." *

Beside the treatise De Gloria, various other valuable productions of Cicero have perished; the most celebrated of which were his six books *De Republica* †, and his essays *De Philosophia*, and *De Virtutibus*: his translations of the *Œconomica* of Xenophon, and of the *Protagoras* and *Timæus* of Plato, are also among those which have shared a similar fate. The version of Cato and Lælius, or the treatises on Old Age and Friendship, by Melmoth, is, whether the text or notes be considered, in every respect truly excellent.

* Life of Petrarch, vol. i. p. 14.

† Leland says, that Tully *de Republ.* was consumed by fire, among other books, in the library of William Selling, a learned abbot of St. Austin's at Canterbury, who died in 1494.

Brutus, though an able orator, and celebrated for his pleadings for Milo, is, in the opinion of Quintilian, entitled only to legitimate praise for his philosophical productions, which in style do justice to the importance of his materials, and he appears to have entered with much feeling and sensibility into the nature of his subject. As a critic, too, his powers were deemed very respectable, and he was thought fully adequate to criticise the compositions of Cicero, whose diction and manner he ventured to disapprove, and to mention his objections even to the author himself. The Orator of Cicero, addressed to Brutus, and the essay De Claris Oratoribus, which is designated by his name, are honours which would alone confer immortality.

Cornelius Celsus has written an elegant and instructive treatise on Medicine; the language is pure and correct, but the materials are taken, not from his own experience, but almost solely from the writings of the Greek physicians. It is doubtful, indeed, whether Celsus ever practised medicine or surgery, or was at all acquainted with the science he wrote upon, otherwise than through the medium of books. He composed likewise essays on military and rustic affairs, which were in considerable estimation. Quintilian, however, seems to have entertained no great idea of the originality and genius of this writer, whom, in his twelfth book, he terms "mediocri vir ingenio." His volume on medicine, however, the only part of his writings which is left us, contains the essence of

Grecian experience, and will ever be deemed an invaluable classic by the profession. The edition published by Almeloveen is perhaps the best: the Glasgow copy is incorrect.

Of PLANCUS I have merely the information of Quintilian to detail; that he was a disciple of the Stoic sect, and, being learned in the doctrine he professed to teach, was esteemed an useful and profound writer on the subject: nothing, however, exists of his composition to corroborate the opinion.

CATIUS, on the contrary, was an Epicurean, and though rather light and trivial in his manner, yet, upon the whole, observes the critic, a pleasing and elegant author. With regard to the preservation of his productions, he has experienced the fate of Plancus.

Quintilian, after exculpating himself from the charge of personally hating SENECA, whose mode of composition he had greatly disapproved, proceeds to give a very just and impartial critique on his merits and defects. Deviating from the pure and chaste example of the Augustan age, this philosopher has chalked out for himself a new path, and with a lavish hand has decorated its windings with flowers of every various scent and hue; they are assorted however with little taste, and display a gaudy and meretricious line. Speaking in less metaphorical language, it may be said that Seneca possessed erudition, wit, and elocution; but an affectation of novelty, both in sentiment and diction, and a deficiency of judgment and of taste, have plunged him into great and nume-

rous offences against simplicity and purity. To young minds this style is dangerous and alluring, for, as the Rhetorician has very emphatically observed, "abundat dulcibus vitiis."

The compositions of Seneca are numerous; his *epistles*, *treatises*, *dialogues*, and *questions*, are preserved, and some of the tragedies which are extant under the name of the Senecas, are attributed to him, especially the *Medea*, the *Troas*, and the *Hippolytus*. Lipsius and Gronovius are, I believe, the best editors of this author.

In the arrangement of Quintilian with respect to Roman literature, which we have now terminated, several authors, and of no mean repute, who were either anterior to, or contemporaries of the critic, have been omitted; these we shall just mention, and with very little comment; namely, Cornelius Nepos, Phædrus; Manilius, if, as conjectured, of the Augustan age; Paterculus; Quintus Curtius, whose period of existence, however, is not accurately fixed; Pliny the Elder, Silius Italicus, Martial, and Statius. A considerable portion of the productions of these writers is extant. Nepos and Phædrus are unrivalled in elegance and simplicity. Curtius is spirited and interesting. Pliny has amassed information of the most varied kind, both curious and interesting. Silius, though occasionally elegant and accurate in description, is tame and nerveless. Statius, bold, energetic, and frequently sublime, has not yet had justice done him, for, though sometimes tumid, unnatural, and gigantic in his imagery, his *Thebaid* is, upon the whole, a work of considerable genius.

In his *Sylvæ*, of which five books are extant, are many very beautiful and highly pleasing poems.

Of the authors posterior to the age of Quintilian, and his friends Tacitus and Pliny, little in the way of commendation can be said. The expiring genius of Rome seemed to revive in the writings of Claudian and Boëthius; and criticism and biography still preserved their lustre in the compositions of Aulus Gellius and Suetonius. On the Epitomisers Florus, Justin, Eutropius, and Victor, being devoid of all claim to originality, it is altogether unnecessary to dwell; history indeed, except in the pages of Marcellinus, seems to have been nearly extinct; a total want of energy and genius characterized Europe at this period, and shortly afterward ferocity and ignorance overturned the ancient temple of the Muses.

Sudden the Goth and Vandal, dreaded names,
Rush as the breach of waters, whelming all
Their domes, their villas; down the festive piles,
Down fall their Parian porches, gilded baths,
And roll before the storm in clouds of dust.
Vain end of human strength, of human skill,
Conquest, and triumph, and domain, and pomp,
And ease and luxury! O luxury!
Bane of elated life, of affluent states,
What dreary change, what ruin is not thine?
How doth thy bowl intoxicate the mind!
To the soft entrance of thy rosy cave,
How dost thou lure the fortunate and great!
Dreadful attraction! while behind thee gapes
Th' unfathomable gulph where Asbur lies
O'erwhelm'd, forgotten; and high-boasting Cham;

And Elam's haughty pomp; and BEAUTEOUS GREECE;
And the great queen of earth, IMPERIAL ROME.
DYER.

I now proceed to marshal the authors of Rome on the same plan I have adopted with regard to their predecessors of Greece; and I flatter myself these tables, giving at once a direct and clear view of the present state of ancient literature, will prove strongly illustrative of the object of my papers.

Authors.	*Compositions Preserved.*	*Compositions Lost.*
Virgil.	Bucolics, Georgics, Æneid.	Some juvenile pieces.
Macer.		His poem on the Ruins of Troy, and his other productions.
Lucretius.	Six books De Natura Rerum.	
Varro Atacinus.		His Argonautica, and his poem De Bello Sequanico.
Ennius.		Tragedies, Comedies, Satires, Annals of Rome, Scipio.
Ovid.	Heroides, Tristia, De Arte Amandi, De Remedio Amoris, Amorum, Metamorphoses, Fasti, &c. &c.	Medea a Tragedy, six books of the Fasti.
Cornelius Severus.		His epic on the Sicilian War, and many smaller poems.

Authors.	*Compositions Preserved.*	*Compositions Lost.*
Valerius Flaccus.	Eight books of the Argonautica.	
Saleius Bassus.		His entire works.
Rabirius.		His poem on Augustus.
Pedo Albinovanus.		An heroic poem.
Lucan.	His Pharsalia, in ten books.	Several juvenile poems.
Tibullus.	Four books of Elegies.	
Propertius.	Four books of Elegies.	
Cornelius Gallus.		His Elegies.
Lucilius.		Thirty Satires.
Horace.	Five books of Odes, Two of Satires, Two of Epistles, De Arte Poetica.	A few Odes.
Persius.	Six Satires.	
Juvenal.	Sixteen Satires.	Several Satires.
Terentius Varro.	Two treatises, De Re Rustica, et De Lingua Latina.	Near five hundred Essays.
Catullus.	Heroic, lyric, elegiac, and epigrammatic poems.	
Bibaculus.		Annals, Epigrams, Lyric poems.
Cæsius Bassus.		Lyric poems.
Accius.		Tragedies, Comedies, and Annals in verse.
Pacuvius.		Tragedies, Satires.
Varius.		Tragedies.
Pomponius Secundus.		Tragedies.
Plautus.	Nineteen Comedies.	Six Comedies.
Cæcilius.		Thirty Comedies.
Terentius.	Six Comedies.	One hundred and two Comedies.

Authors.	*Compositions Preserved.*	*Compositions Lost.*
Afranius.		His Comedies.
Sallust.	Bellum Catilinarium, Bellum Jugurthinum.	Six books of Roman History.
Livy.	Thirty-five books of his History.	One hundred and five books.
Servilius Novianus.		His entire works.
Bassus Aufidius.		History of the Germanic War.
Tacitus.	Five books of History, Sixteen of Annals, De Moribus Germanorum, Vita Agricolæ.	Fourteen books of Annals and History.
Cicero.	Fifty-nine Orations, Thirty-six books of Epistles, De Inventione, lib. ii. De Oratore, lib. iii. De Claris Oratoribus, Orator, Topica, De optimo genere Oratorum, Academicarum Quæstionum, lib. ii. De Finibus, lib. v. Tusculanarum Quæstionum, lib. v. De Natura Deorum, lib. iii. De Divinatione, lib. ii. De Fato, De Legibus, lib. iii. De Officiis, lib. iii. Cato, Lælius, Paradoxa, De Petitione, Somnium Scipionis, &c. &c.	Many Orations, Thirty-two books of Epistles, Economica e Xenophonte, lib. iii. Protagoras ex Platone, De Republica, lib. vi. De Jure Civili, De Auguriis, De Philosophia, Laus Catonis, De Gloria, lib. ii. De Consolatione, De Suis Consiliis, De Virtutibus, De Notis, Timæus ex Platone, &c. &c.

Authors.	*Compositions Preserved.*	*Compositions Lost.*
Asinius Pollio.	A few Epistles to Cicero.	Orations, Tragedies, Seventeen books of a history of the civil wars of Rome.
Messala.		His Orations.
Caius Cæsar.	His Commentaries.	Orations, and Grammatical Treatises.
Celius.		His Orations.
Calvus.		Oration and Poems.
Servius Sulpitius.		His Orations.
Cassius Severus.		Orations.
Domitius Afer.		Orations, and two books on Oratory.
Julius Africanus.		Orations.
Trachallus.		His Orations.
Vibius Crispus.		His Orations.
Julius Secundus.		Orations.
Plinius Secundus.	Panegyric on Trajan, Ten books of Epistles.	Orations, History of his own Times, Poems.
Brutus.		Orations, Philosophical Essays.
Cornelius Celsus.	Treatise De Re Medica.	Essays on Military, and Rustic Affairs.
Plancus.		His works on Stoicism.
Catius.		Essays on Epicurism.
Seneca.	Treatises, Epistles, Dialogues, Tragedies, &c.	

From the account which we have now given of the Greek and Roman classics, and from the tables drawn up from that account, it may be inferred with every probability of truth, that the losses we have sustained in ancient literature

have been owing, not to the *indiscriminate* and destructive powers of fire, but to the operation of ignorance, the accidental ravages of war, and a mistaken zeal for religion. In every age there have been some men of superior knowledge, and who have felt a love for letters; these have hoarded up and cherished the manuscripts of the more valuable authors: from the grasp of Stupidity, the fury of Barbarism, and the rage of Bigotry, they have concealed the precious rolls, and by industry in copying and translating have preserved and perpetuated what was obtained with difficulty and danger. Had fire been the chief engine in desolating the realms of literature, could any distinction have taken place between the productions of Homer and the merest poetaster, between the pages of Plato, and the most ignorant pretender to philosophy? Yet we observe, with few exceptions, the most valuable authors of Greece and Rome, according to the opinion even of their own critics, descending to us, many of them entire, and others in tolerable preservation; while crowds of inferior and unimportant writers have sunk into oblivion. Of the injuries also we have sustained, the greater number can be accounted for from other causes than that of fire. With regard to Grecian literature, we have Homer, Theocritus, Herodotus, Thucydides, Demosthenes, Isocrates, Plato, Xenophon, Aristotle, Plutarch, and Lucian, authors of the first rank, almost in a perfect state. The great chasm in the Library of Greece is to be found in the dramatic department; yet in this province, so devastated

by the most stupid fanaticism, we possess very valuable specimens of the genius of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, allowed by all to be the three first poets in the tragic line. Comedy, with the exception of Aristophanes, has absolutely perished beneath the hands of pious zeal: "when the whole world," observes Mr. Cumberland, "seemed to conspire against Genius; when learning had degenerated into sophism, and religion was made a theme of metaphysical subtlety, serving, as it should seem, no other purpose but to puzzle and confound, to inflame the passions and to perplex the head; then it was that the Fathers of the church, in whose hands these authors were, held it a point of conscience to destroy the idols of the temple, and to bury heathen wit in the same grave with heathen superstition; their poets and their gods were to be exterminated alike. To the more enlightened taste, or rather, perhaps, to the lucky partiality of *Chrysostom* alone, we owe the preservation of *Aristophanes*," whom he fortunately rescued "from his more scrupulous Christian contemporaries, whose zeal was fatally too successful in destroying every other comic author out of a very numerous collection, of which no one entire scene now remains." * It is supposed that near two thousand Greek plays, the labours of about two hundred authors, perished through the ignorance and folly of these misguided men, who considered learning as pernicious to genuine piety, and mistook

* The Observer, vol. v. p. 1. 6.; vol. iii. p. 16.9.

illiberal ignorance for Christian simplicity. Very probably the Odes of Sappho, and the effusions of various other lyric bards of Greece, met with a similar fate in the hands of these semi-barbarians, who appear to have placed no value on any other study than that of controversial and scholastic theology.

The same facts present themselves on a view of *Roman* literature; most of its best authors have reached us entire, and been preserved by similar means. The Monks, who, in the dark periods succeeding the destruction of the western empire, formed the only description of persons that had the least tincture of letters, carefully hid in their Monasteries, and frequently employed themselves in their *Scriptoria* in copying the manuscripts of ancient writers, and, by these means, in some measure repaired the useless and wanton havoc of the Fathers, who, even so early as the fourth century, did no small injury to ancient literature by prohibiting the study of its philosophic writings. Hence the story, that Jerom dreamed he was whipped by the Devil for reading Cicero. "The Monks of Cassino in Italy," observes Warton, "were distinguished before the year 1000, not only for their knowledge of the sciences, but their attention to polite learning, and an acquaintance with the classics. Their learned abbot Desiderius collected the best of the Greek and Roman writers. This fraternity not only composed learned treatises in music, logic, astronomy, and the Vitruvian architecture, but likewise employed a portion of their time in transcribing

Tacitus, Jornandes, Josephus, Ovid's Fasti, Cicero, Seneca, Donatus the grammarian, Virgil, Theocritus and Homer." * This laudable example was, in the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries, followed with great spirit and emulation by many English Monasteries; more particularly by the Abbeys of St. Alban, St. Edmondsbury, St. Swithin at Winchester, Ely, Croyland, and Glastonbury.

Of the great authors of Rome, Virgil, Lucretius, Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius, Horace, Cæsar, Lucan, Nepos, Phædrus, and Persius, may be deemed in a perfect state: we possess a very considerable, and the major part of the writings of Plautus, Cicero, Ovid, Juvenal, and Statius; of Terence and the two Plinies, we have large and estimable remains. The great deficiency, and ever to be lamented, in Roman letters, is in the historic department; for though of the productions of Sallust and Livy we retain considerable and highly valuable portions, their readers soon with acute disappointment discover that the greater and more important part has perished. Tacitus, too, the most instructive of historians, is much mutilated; yet, most probably, the commission of these ravages is to be ascribed to a very modern period. In the fifteenth century several of the books of Livy were brought to light; and there is little doubt but at that time an entire copy was in existence: Antonio Beccatelli is said to have purchased of Poggius a beautiful manuscript of

* On the introduction of Learning into England.

Livy, for which he gave the latter a large field, in the year 1455; nay, it has been asserted that a perfect copy was extant in 1631. Leo the Tenth entertained great hopes of recovering this historian, and used all his influence and power in promoting the research; and even in the present age there are some who indulge the expectation that the complete history may yet be found, for such an one is reported to be existing in an Arabic version.* As to Sallust, Hume has remarked that his larger history is cited by Fitz-Stephens, in his description of London. (History of England, vol. ii. p. 440. quarto edition.)†

The preceding papers will, I flatter myself, have provided no uninstructive entertainment; they have furnished a critical account of the

* See Hayley's Notes to the first epistle of his Essay on History.

About the year 1782, or 1783, Joseph Vella, a native of the island of Malta, pretended to have discovered seventeen of the lost books of Livy, in Arabic; and the Dowager Lady Spencer, who was at that time travelling through Italy, liberally offered to be at the expence of publishing them. This offer however Vella wisely refused; yet had he the matchless impudence in a short time afterwards to print, by way of specimen, what he chose to call an Italian version of the 60th book, and which proved, upon inspection, to be nothing more than the common epitome ascribed to Florus! Dr. Hager, in the year 1791, completely detected the still more extensive forgeries of this man, which had been published at the expence of the King of Naples under the appellations of The Martinian and Norman Codes.

† Warton says, that Peter de Blois, an Archdeacon of the 12th century, quotes, in his Latin Epistles, (Epist. 91.) a passage concerning Pompey the Great, from the *Roman History* of Sallust, *in six books*, now lost, and which appears at present only in part among the fragments of that valuable historian. — Warton, vol. ii. p. 431.

best authors of antiquity, and they will have placed, I hope, in a clear and distinct light the present state of ancient literature, with regard to what we have preserved and lost of its productions: they will also, I trust, in a great measure, have proved that the deprivations we have suffered have been occasioned by ignorance, negligence, and intemperate zeal, operating uniformly for centuries, and not through the medium of either concerted or accidental conflagration.

No. XXXIX.

Haud facile emergunt, quorum virtutibus obstat
Res angusta domi. JUVENAL, *Sat.* iii.

Ah! who can tell how hard it is to climb
The steep where Fame's proud temple shines afar!
Ah! who can tell how many a soul sublime
Has felt the influence of malignant star,
And waged with Fortune an eternal war!
Check'd by the scoff of Pride, by Envy's frown,
And Poverty's unconquerable bar,
In life's low vale remote has pin'd alone,
Then dropt into the grave, unpitied and unknown!
BEATTIE.

THE difficulties which Genius when allied to Poverty has to encounter in its progress toward fame, have been too often experienced and deplored, from the period of the Roman Satirist to that of the amiable author of the Minstrel. But a few years have elapsed since the exquisite imagination of poor Chatterton withered beneath the pressure of absolute want. A happier fate, however, has awaited the rustic poet Burns; his productions, the offspring of simplicity and fancy, have been liberally and deservedly patronised by the literary world; nor will the "FARMER'S BOY," a poem literally the composition of the character it describes, and on which

we now purpose to deliver some critical opinions, present a less valid claim to its admiration and support.

Notwithstanding the originality and beauty, however, which this poem certainly possesses, it had most probably been doomed to oblivion or neglect in its manuscript state, had not the generous interference of Mr. Capel Lofft snatched it from a lot so unmerited, and placed it before the public eye. His judgment and taste immediately discerned its uncommon worth, and he has had the felicity of introducing to the lovers of elegant literature, not only a poet of considerable rank, but, what is of still higher value, a man of the most unblemished moral character.

From the affectionate and well-written narrative of his brother George, we learn that Robert Bloomfield, the author of the "Farmer's Boy," served Mr. Austin, a tenant of the Duke of Grafton's, at Sapiston in Suffolk, in this very capacity, when not above eleven years of age, having previously learned, however, both to read and write. In this situation, which he has so accurately described, and where he first imbibed his enthusiastic attachment to the charms of Nature, he continued until he was thirteen years and a half old; when he left the country, to become a shoe-maker under his brother in town. Here he omitted no opportunity of improving his mind, and has furnished another proof of the rapid advances of genius, and of the futility of all calculation with regard to its progress: for, with literary resources ap-

parently the most scanty and inadequate, he yet contrived to acquire a fund of the most useful knowledge, and at the age of sixteen had written and published a song which displays an intimacy truly astonishing with the poetic diction and versification of his native language. It was about this time, too, that accident threw into his hands the *Seasons* of Thomson; a work so congenial to his feelings and fancy must have afforded him pleasures of the most exquisite and exalted kind, and we may conceive of him as exclaiming in terms somewhat similar to the following:

> Then "Thomson" had indeed a poet's charms:
> New to my taste, his "imagery" surpass'd
> The struggling efforts of my boyish tongue
> To speak its excellence; I danc'd for joy.
> I marvell'd much that at so ripe an age
> As twice "eight" years, his beauties had then first
> Engag'd my wonder, and admiring still,
> And still admiring, with regret suppos'd
> The joy half lost because not sooner found.
>
> COWPER.

Fortunately for the admirers of genuine poesy, about the year 1784 young Robert, to avoid the consequences of some unpleasant disputes among his brethren of the trade, returned for two months into the country, and was received by Mr. Austin with the kindest hospitality. It is to this event we owe the composition of his admirable poem; "and here," observes his brother, "with his mind

glowing with the fine descriptions of rural scenery which he found in Thomson's Seasons, he again retraced the very fields where he first began to think. Here, free from the smoke, the noise, the contention of the city, he imbibed that love of rural Simplicity and rural Innocence, which fitted him, in a great degree, to be the writer of such a thing as the 'Farmer's Boy.'"*

After this visit to his native fields he recommenced his business in London, and shortly afterwards married a young woman of the name of *Church*. It was after this connection had taken place, that in the garret of a house in Bell-alley, Coleman-Street, and amid six or seven other workmen, he composed his poem! He is the father of three children, and was born on the third of December 1766.

To this outline of his life, it may be added that, as a son, a husband, and a father, his conduct has been exemplary. This indeed must be the presumption of every person in perusing his production; for piety, sensibility, and the most engaging and artless simplicity, breathe throughout the whole, and irresistibly attach the feelings of the reader.

From the pleasing duty of describing such a character, let us now turn our attention to the species of composition of which his poem is so perfect a specimen. It has been observed in my sixteenth number that pastoral poetry in this country, with very few exceptions, has too often exhibited a tame and servile adherence

* Vide Preface, by Capel Lofft, Esq. p. xi.

to classical imagery and costume, at the same time totally overlooking that profusion of picturesque beauty, and that originality of manner and peculiarity of employment which our climate and our rustics every where present. A few authors were mentioned in that essay as having judiciously deviated from the customary plan; to these may be now added the name of *Bloomfield*; the "Farmer's Boy," though not assuming the form of an eclogue, being peculiarly and exclusively throughout a pastoral composition; not, like the poem of Thomson, taking a wide excursion through all the phænomena of the Seasons, but nearly limited to the rural occupations and business of the fields, the dairy, and the farm-yard. As with these employments, however, the vicissitudes of the year are immediately and necessarily connected, Mr. Bloomfield has, with propriety, divided his poem into four books, affixing to these books the titles of the seasons; an arrangement, it is true, which, at first sight, may induce the purchaser to prepare himself for strong traces of imitation; the perusal of a few pages, however, will completely dissipate his apprehensions, and unfold to him a character which has not been common in any period of the world, a genuine and original poet.

Such indeed are the merits of this work, that, in true *pastoral* imagery and simplicity, I do not think any production can be put in competition with it since the days of Theocritus. To that charming rusticity which particularises the Grecian are added the individuality, fide-

lity, and boldness of description which render Thomson so interesting to the lovers of Nature. Gesner possesses the most engaging sentiment, and the most refined simplicity of manners, but he wants that rustic wildness and naïveté in delineation characteristic of the Sicilian and of the composition before us. Warner and Drayton have much to recommend them, but they are very unequal, and are devoid of the sweet and pensive morality which pervade almost every page of the "Farmer's Boy;" nor can they establish any pretensions to that fecundity in painting the economy of rural life, which this poem, drawn from actual experience, so richly displays. It is astonishing, indeed, what various and striking circumstances peculiar to the occupation of the British Farmer, and which are adapted to all the purposes of the pastoral Muse, had escaped our poets previous to the publication of Mr. Bloomfield's work. Those who are partial to the country, (and where is the man of genius who feels not a delight approaching to ecstasy from the contemplation of its scenery, and of the happiness which its cultivation diffuses?) those who have paid attention to the process of husbandry, and who view its occurrences with interest, who are at the same time alive to all the minutiæ of the animal and vegetable creation, who mark

How nature paints her colours, how the bee
Sits on the bloom extracting liquid sweet,

will derive from the study of this poem, if intellectual pleasure be, as I believe, the noblest product of existence, a gratification the most permanent and pure.

Having thus given some idea of the design and general execution of the "Farmer's Boy," it may be of use to insert an analysis of the whole, to which I shall annex a few observations on and specimens of the versification, imagery, and sentiment.

The *first* book, entitled *Spring*, opens with an appropriate invocation; a transition is then made to the artless character of Giles, the Farmer's Boy; after which, the scene near Euston in Suffolk is described, and an amiable portrait of Mr. Austin immediately follows. Seed-time, harrowing, the devastation of the rooks, wood-scenery, the melody of birds, cows milking, and the operations of the dairy, occupy the chief part of this season, which is closed with a beautiful personification of the Spring and her attendants, and an admirable delineation of the sportive pleasures of the young lambs.

The *second* book, or *Summer*, commences with a characteristic sketch of the prudent yet benevolent farmer. The genial influence of the ra[illegible] is then welcomed; to which succeeds a most delicious picture of a green and woody covert, with all its insect tribe. The ascension of the sky-lark, the peaceful repose of Giles, a view of the ripening harvest, with some moral reflections on Nature and her great Creator, are introduced, followed by animated descrip-

tions of reaping, gleaning, the honest exultation of the farmer, the beauty of the country-girl, and the wholesome refreshment of the field. Animals teased by insects, the cruelty of docking horses, the insolence of the gander, the apathy of the swine, are drawn in a striking manner; and the book concludes with masterly pictures of a twilight repose, a midnight storm of thunder and lightning, and views of the ancient and present mode of celebrating harvest-home.

The *third* book, termed *Autumn*, is introduced with a delineation of forest-scenery, and of pigs fattening on fallen acorns. Sketches of wild-ducks, and their haunts, of hogs settling to repose in a wood, and of wheat-sowing, succeed. The sound of village-bells suggests a most pleasing digression, of which the church and its pastor, the rustic amusements of a Sunday, the village-maids, and a most pathetic description of a distracted female, are the prominent features. Returning to rural business, Giles is drawn guarding the rising wheat from birds; his little hut, with his preparation for the reception of his playmates, their treachery, and his disappointment and reflections, are conceived and coloured in an exquisite style. Fox-hunting, the Fox-hound's epitaph, the long autumnal evenings, a description of domestic fowls, and a welcome to the snowy nights of winter, form the concluding topics of this season.

The *fourth* book, under the appellation of *Winter*, is ushered in by some humane injunc

tions for the treatment of the storm-pinched cattle. The frozen turnips are broken for them, and the cow-yard at night is described. The conviviality of a Christmas evening, and the conversation round the fire, with the admonitions from the Master's chair, are depicted in a manner truly pleasing. The sea-boy and the farmer's boy are contrasted with much effect: and the ploughman feeding his horses at night, with the comparison between the cart-horse and post-horse, have great merit. The mastiff, turned sheep-biter, is next delineated, succeeded by a description of a moonlight night, and the appearance of a spectre. The counting of the sheep in the fold, and the adopted lambs, are beautiful paintings; and, with the triumph of Giles on the termination of the year, and his address to the Deity, the book and poem close.

Such are the materials of which the "Farmer's Boy" is constructed. Several of the topics, it will be perceived, are new to poetry, and of those which are in their *title* familiar to the readers of our descriptive bards, it will be found that the imagery and adjunctive circumstances are original, and the effort of a mind practised in the rare art of selecting and combining the most striking and picturesque features of an object. It is somewhat singular, indeed, that a poet so young, and such an enthusiastic admirer, too, of the Seasons of Thomson, should have had the address to avoid, in so great a degree, those trains of associated imagery which must be the necessary result of their frequent perusal. Nature, however, who had early awakened his

mind to all her numerous beauties, and had gifted him with those powers of fancy which form the painter and the poet, and beneath whose operation no subject is exhausted, had too vividly impressed his imagination, and had taught him to place her productions in too many varied lights to permit of the servility of imitation. They were the impression, indeed, of his earliest youth, and anterior to those derived from the study of our poets.

In considering the VERSIFICATION and DICTION of this poem, my astonishment, I confess, has been greatly excited. The mechanism and structure of verse require not only a just and delicate ear, but a close and persevering attention to the choice and arrangement of words, to the adaptation of pause and cadence. An intimate acquaintance, too, with our poetic idiom in all its different stages, with the niceties of grammar, and the progressive improvements of our language, appear to be essential in attaining to energy and expressive harmony in their construction. I am well aware that smooth and flowing lines are of easy purchase, and the property of almost every poetaster of the day: but the versification of Mr. Bloomfield is of another character; it displays beauties of the most positive kind, and those witcheries of expression which are only to be acquired by the united efforts of genius and study. How our author has been enabled to conquer the difficulties, which in his situation must have so frequently thwarted his progress towards excellence in this department, I know not: but that they have

been overcome, and that completely too, every page in his volume bears evidence.

The *general* characteristics of his versification are facility and sweetness; that ease which is, in fact, the result of unremitted labour, and one of the most valuable acquisitions in literature. It displays occasionally, likewise, a vigour and a brilliancy of polish that might endure comparison with the high-wrought texture of the Muse of Darwin. From the nature of his subject, however, this splendid mode of decoration could be used but with a sparing hand; and it is not one of his least merits that his diction and harmony should so admirably correspond with the theme he has chosen. To the extracts which I purpose shortly drawing from this poem, I appeal for the corroboration of these opinions; and I shall notice, as I proceed, not doubting but that they will amply answer my encomia, such lines as appear most remarkable for their melody and beauty.

To excel in painting rural IMAGERY, it is necessary that the poet should diligently study Nature for himself, and not peruse her, as is but too common, "through the spectacles of books." He should trace her in all her windings, in her deepest recesses, in all her varied attitudes and forms: it was thus that Lucretius and Virgil, that Thomson and Cowper, were enabled to unfold their scenery with such distinctness and truth; and on this plan, whilst wandering through his native fields, attentive to "each rural sight, each rural sound," has Mr. Bloomfield built his charming poem. It is a

work which proves how inexhaustible are the features of the world we inhabit; how, from objects which the mass of mankind is daily accustomed to pass with indifference and neglect, genius can still produce pictures the most fascinating, and of the most instructive tendency; for it is not to imagery *alone*, though such as here depicted might secure the meed of fame, that the "Farmer's Boy" will owe its value with us and with posterity; a morality the most pathetic and pure, the feelings of a heart alive to all the tenderest duties of humanity and religion, consecrate its glowing landscapes, and shed an interest over them; a spirit of devotion, that calm and rational delight, which the goodness and greatness of the Creator ought ever to inspire.

I shall now collect a few specimens of the imagery so profusely scattered over Mr. Bloomfield's poetry; and I can assure my readers that the whole will be found to correspond in richness and harmony with the passages thus detached, which have no superiority, that I know of, over the numerous beauties which the compass and even design of these essays would not permit me to display.

The following description of wood-scenery, and of its various birds, has both novelty of colouring and harmony of versification to recommend it: the lines in Italics appear to me to contain new images; and the close is in its cadence and construction perfect music. It was part of Giles's employment, early in the morning, to shift from place to place the dead

rooks that were scattered over the field, in order to terrify their surviving comrades from the grain.

—— When at day-break summon'd from his bed,
Light as the lark that caroll'd o'er his head,
His sandy way, deep-worn by hasty showers,
O'er-arch'd with oaks that form'd fantastic bowers,
Waving aloft their tow'ring branches proud,
In borrow'd tinges from the eastern cloud,
(Whence inspiration, pure as ever flow'd,
And genuine transport, in his bosom glow'd,)
His own shrill matin join'd the various notes
Of nature's music from a thousand throats:
The blackbird strove with emulation sweet,
And Echo answer'd from her close retreat;
The sporting white-throat on some twig's end borne,
Pour'd hymns to Freedom and the rising morn;
Stopt in her song, perchance, the starting thrush
Shook a white shower from the black-thorn bush,
Where dew-drops thick as early blossoms hung,
And trembled as the minstrel sweetly sung.
Spring, line 129.

The most original parts of this production are those which paint the various occupations of the Farmer and his household; among these, milking forms a very important office; and although frequently described by our poets, I may venture to affirm that of the ensuing passage the lines in Italics include a sketch hitherto unattempted.

Forth comes the Maid, and like the morning smiles;
The Mistress too, and followed close by Giles.

A friendly tripod forms their humble seat,
With pails bright scour'd, and delicately sweet.
Where shadowing elms obstruct the morning ray,
Begins their work, begins the simple lay;
The full-charg'd udder yields its willing streams,
While Mary sings some lover's amorous dreams:
And crouching Giles beneath a neighbouring tree
Tugs o'er his pail, and chants with equal glee:
Whose hat with tatter'd brim, of knap so bare,
From the cow's side purloins a coat of hair,
A mottled ensign of his harmless trade,
An unambitious, peaceable cockade.

Spring, l. 191.

The Season of Spring closes with a most exquisite, and, in part, original picture of Lambs at play, a subject that has called forth the descriptive powers of the Sons of Song from the earliest period to the present hour. Lucretius and Dyer have touched it with a masterly hand; nor has Thomson forgotten a scene so congenial to his feelings. From the two former poets I have already quoted these elegant morsels, and I shall now transfer to my pages the corresponding design of Thomson.

——————— Lead me to the mountain-brow
Where sits the shepherd on the grassy turf,
Inhaling, healthful, the descending sun.
Around him feeds his many-bleating flock,
Of various cadence; and his sportive lambs,
This way and that convolv'd, in friskful glee,
Their frolics play. And now the sprightly race
Invites them forth; when swift, the signal given,
They start away, and sweep the mossy mound
That runs around the hill.

Spring, l. 899.

Though this and the delineation from Lucretius and Dyer possess great merit, I have not the smallest hesitation in declaring that what I have now to transcribe from the "Farmer's Boy" is in every respect superior. Its commencement, whether the sentiment, imagery, or versification, be considered, is entitled to the warmest praise. The first lines marked by Italics display in their construction the most finished harmony, and those below in the same type, are new in point of description, and breathe the utmost tenderness and sweetness.

Say, ye that know, ye who have felt and seen
Spring's morning smiles, and soul-enliv'ning green,
Say, did you give the thrilling transport way?
Did your eye brighten, when young lambs at play
Leap'd o'er your path with animated pride,
Or graz'd in merry clusters by your side?
Ye who can smile, to wisdom no disgrace,
At the arch meaning of a kitten's face;
If spotless innocence, and infant mirth,
Excites to praise, or gives reflection birth;
In shades like these pursue your favourite joy,
'Midst Nature's revels, sports that never cloy.
A few begin a short but vigorous race,
And indolence abash'd soon flies the place;
Thus challeng'd forth, see thither one by one,
From every side assembling playmates run;
A thousand wily antics mark their stay,
A starting crowd, impatient of delay.
Like the fond dove, from fearful prison freed,
Each seems to say, "Come, let us try our speed;"
Away they scour, impetuous, ardent, strong,
The green turf trembling as they bound along;

Adown the slope, then up the hillock climb,
Where every molehill is a bed of thyme;
There panting stop; yet scarcely can refrain;
A bird, a leaf, will set them off again:
Or, if a gale with strength unusual blow,
Scatt'ring the wild-brier roses into snow,
Their little limbs increasing efforts try,
Like the torn flower the fair assemblage fly.
Ah, fallen rose! sad emblem of their doom;
Frail as thyself, they perish while they bloom!
Tho' unoffending innocence may plead,
Tho' frantic ewes may mourn the savage deed,
Their shepherd comes, a messenger of blood,
And drives them bleating from their sports and food.
Spring, l. 309.

The passage which I have next to produce, unfolds the descriptive abilities of our poet to great advantage; the green covert, its insects, and the sky-lark, are paintings glowing with the richest colouring, and finished with wonderful fidelity and accuracy. Not Bassano or Waterloo could sketch with more attention to the minutiæ of Nature. Giles, having fatigued himself by his endeavours to frighten an host of sparrows from the wheat-ears, retires to repose beneath the friendly shelter of some projecting boughs.

Green covert, hail! for thro' the varying year
No hours so sweet, no scene to him so dear.
Here *Wisdom's* placid eye delighted sees
His frequent intervals of lonely ease,
And with one ray his infant soul inspires,
Just kindling there her never-dying fires,
Whence solitude derives peculiar charms,
And heaven-directed thought his bosom warms.

Just where the parting bough's light shadows play,
Scarce in the shade, nor in the scorching day,
Stretch'd on the turf he lies, a peopled bed,
Where swarming insects creep around his head.
The small dust-colour'd beetle climbs with pain
O'er the smooth plantain leaf, a spacious plain!
Thence higher still, by countless steps convey'd,
He gains the summit of a shiv'ring blade,
And flirts his filmy wings, and looks around,
Exulting in his distance from the ground.
The tender speckled moth here dancing seen,
The vaulting grasshopper of glossy green,
And all prolific Summer's sporting train,
Their little lives by various powers sustain.
But what can unassisted vision do?
What, but recoil where most it would pursue;
His patient gaze but finish with a sigh,
When Music waking speaks the sky-lark nigh.
Just starting from the corn she cheerly sings,
And trusts with conscious pride her downy wings;
Still louder breathes, and in the face of day
Mounts up, and calls on Giles to mark her way.
Close to his eyes his hat he instant bends,
And forms a friendly telescope, that lends
Just aid enough to dull the glaring light,
And place the wand'ring bird before his sight;
Yet oft beneath a cloud she sweeps along,
Lost for a while, yet pours her varied song.
He views the spot, and as the cloud moves by,
Again she stretches up the clear blue sky;
Her form, her motion, undistinguish'd quite,
Save when she wheels direct from shade to light:
The flutt'ring songstress a mere speck became,
Like fancy's floating bubbles in a dream:
He sees her yet, but yielding to repose,
Unwittingly his jaded eyelids close.
Delicious sleep! From sleep who could forbear,
With no more guilt than Giles, and no more care?

Peace o'er his slumbers waves her guardian wing,
Nor Conscience once disturbs him with a sting;
He wakes refresh'd from every trivial pain,
And takes his pole and brushes round again.

Summer, l. 63.

In this delightful piece of natural history, how striking and how judiciously selected are the leading features! Than the picture of the beetle, I know nothing more lively and accurate; and the soaring of the sky-lark, though a subject hacknied in the pages of poetry, is delineated with several strokes of minute originality. The most beautiful part in the description of this bird, and which is at once curiously faithful and expressively harmonious, I have copied in Italics. Milton and Thomson have both introduced the flight of the sky-lark, the first with his accustomed spirit and sublimity; but probably no poet has surpassed, either in fancy or expression, the following prose narrative of Dr. Goldsmith. "Nothing," observes he, "can be more pleasing than to see the lark warbling upon the wing; raising its note as it soars, until it seems lost in the immense heights above us; the note continuing, the bird itself unseen; to see it then descending with a swell as it comes from the clouds, yet sinking by degrees as it approaches its nest, the spot where all its affections are centered: the spot that has prompted all this joy." * This description of the descent of the bird, and of the pleasures of its little nest, is conceived in a strain of the most exquisite delicacy and feeling.

* History of the Earth and Animated Nature.

No. XL.

The Muses Fortune's fickle smile deride,
Nor ever bow the knee in Mammon's fane;
For their delights are with the village train,
Whom Nature's laws engage, and Nature's charms:
They hate the sensual, and scorn the vain;
The parasite their influence never warms,
Nor him whose sordid soul the love of wealth alarms.
BEATTIE.

THERE are many poets and painters who excel in the display of the rural charms of Nature, and even in sketching the manners and attitudes of the brute creation; who can transfer, to the page or to the canvass, the picturesque beauties of a landscape, the docility of the domestic, or the ferocity of the wild animal, and are yet utterly unable to throw any spirit or interest round the human figure. Those who either with the pen or pencil combine the energy of human action, with the awful or romantic scenery of a rude, or with the softened features of a cultivated country, secure, and have a claim to the most permanent fame. The banditti of Salvator Rosa, the sweetly interesting figures of Poussin, and the rustic simplicity of Gainsborough, unite with the surrounding views of nature in effecting an impression of the utmost power, and not otherwise procurable than through the medium of a

combination of this kind. A plan exactly similar has been followed by the three great masters of descriptive poetry, Lucretius, Virgil, and Thomson; and Mr. Bloomfield has afforded us another instance of the felicity attending the practice. In several parts of his "Farmer's Boy" he has introduced his characters with the best effect, either grouped or insulated, and with that chaste and simple colouring, and those genuine draughts of rural life, as will for ever render them, either to the poet or philosopher, objects of reference and delight. I shall select two as illustrative of these remarks, the Country Maid and the Mad Girl; the first a design well suited to the canvass of Gainsborough, the second possessing imagery of a higher tone, and calculated for scenery of a wilder hue. Thomson has in his Summer given us, in four lines, a miniature outline of the country maid, but which in no degree fixes on Mr. Bloomfield the smallest charge of imitation; and the Lavinia of the same author is a character altogether of a different cast. These are the lines of Thomson:

——————— full as the summer rose
Blown by prevailing suns, the ruddy maid,
Half naked, swelling on the sight, and all
Her kindled graces burning o'er her cheek.
L. 354.

The following those of Mr. Bloomfield.

—Lo! encircled there, the lovely MAID
In youth's own bloom and native smiles array'd,

Her hat awry, divested of her gown,
Her creaking stays of leather, stout and brown;
Invidious barrier! why art thou so high,
When the slight cov'ring of her neck slips by,
There half revealing to the eager sight
Her full, ripe bosom, exquisitely white?
In many a local tale of harmless mirth,
And many a jest of momentary birth,
She bears a part, and as she stops to speak,
Strokes back the ringlets from her glowing cheek.
Now noon gone by, and four declining hours,
The weary limbs relax their boasted pow'rs;
Thirst rages strong, the fainting spirits fail,
And ask the sov'reign cordial, home-brew'd ale:
Beneath some shelt'ring heap of yellow corn
Rests the hoop'd keg, and friendly cooling horn,
That mocks alike the goblet's brittle frame,
Its costlier potions, and its nobler name.
To *Mary* first the brimming draught is given,
By toil made welcome as the dews of heaven,
And never lip that press'd its homely edge,
Had kinder blessings, or a heartier pledge.
Summer, l. 168.

Than the narrative of the poor distracted female, I know few things more affecting or more beautifully written. It makes its way directly to the heart, and involves several strokes of description which are perfectly novel, clothed in diction the most perspicuous and choice, and highly appropriate to the scene. What, for instance, can be more musical and sweet than the following lines, the last of which displays imagery which is to me altogether original?—

— Causeless seem'd her grief; for quick restrain'd,
Mirth follow'd loud, or indignation reign'd;

Whims wild and simple led her from her home,
The heath, the common, or the fields to roam:
Terror and joy alternate rul'd her hours;
Now blithe she sung, and gather'd useless flow'rs;
Now pluck'd a tender twig from every bough,
To whip the hov'ring demons from her brow.

Autumn, l. 117.

The concluding portion of this episode presents as finished a specimen of versification as can be extracted from the pages of our most polished poets; its pathos is such as to require no comment of mine, but I have thrown into Italics those lines which more particularly struck me by the melody and energy of their construction; two also for their very peculiar excellence I have distinguished by small capitals.

— Nought her rayless melancholy cheers,
Or soothes her breast, or stops her streaming tears.
Her matted locks unornamented flow,
Clasping her knees, and waving to and fro;—
Her head bow'd down, her faded cheek to hide;
A piteous mourner by the pathway side.
Some tufted molehill through the livelong day
She calls her throne; there weeps her life away:
And oft the gaily-passing stranger stays
His well-tim'd step, and takes a silent gaze,
Till sympathetic drops unbidden start,
And pangs quick springing muster round his heart;
And soft he treads with other gazers round,
And fain would catch her sorrow's plaintive sound:
One word alone is all that strikes the ear,
One short, pathetic, simple word,—"*O dear!*"
A thousand times repeated to the wind,
That wafts the sigh, but leaves the pang behind!

For ever of the proffer'd parley shy,
She hears th' unwelcome foot advancing nigh;
Nor quite unconscious of her wretched plight,
Gives one sad look, and hurries out of sight. —
Fair promis'd sun-beams of terrestrial bliss,
Health's gallant hopes, — and are ye sunk to this?
For in life's road though thorns abundant grow,
There still are joys poor Poll can never know;
Joys which the gay companions of her prime
SIP, AS THEY DRIFT ALONG THE STREAM OF TIME;
At eve to hear beside their tranquil home
The lifted latch, that speaks the lover come:
That love matur'd, next playful on the knee
TO PRESS THE VELVET LIP OF INFANCY;
To stay the tottering step, the features trace; —
Inestimable sweets of social peace!
O Thou! who bidst the vernal juices rise,
Thou, on whose blasts autumnal foliage flies!
Let Peace ne'er leave me, nor my heart grow cold,
Whilst life and sanity are mine to hold.
Autumn, l. 143.

From the length of the narrative, I have indulged myself with copying but one half; the whole, however, abounds with minute touches of characteristic description, and may vie in this respect with the crazy Kate of Cowper; of which, who can read the following passage without acknowledging the fidelity of the poet in painting the caprices of insanity?

——————— A tatter'd apron hides,
Worn as a cloak, and hardly hides, a gown
More tatter'd still; and both but ill conceal
A bosom heav'd with never-ceasing sighs.
She begs an idle pin of all she meets,
And hoards them in her sleeve; but needful food,

Though press'd with hunger oft, or comelier clothes,
Though pinch'd with cold, asks never. — Kate is
craz'd.

I shall close these observations on and specimens of the imagery of the "Farmer's Boy" with some lines illustrative of the approach of Spring, and which terminate with an image, which I think has not been anticipated, and is certainly of the most delicate beauty.

——————— So Winter flies! —
And see the source of life and light uprise!
A height'ning arch o'er southern hills he bends;
Warm on the cheek the slanting beam descends,
And gives the reeking mead a brighter hue,
And draws the modest primrose bud to view.
Yet frosts succeed, and winds impetuous rush,
And hail-storms rattle thro' the budding bush;
And night-fall'n Lambs require the shepherd's care,
And teeming Ewes, that still their burthens bear;
Beneath whose sides to-morrow's dawn may see
The milk-white strangers bow the trembling knee.
Winter, l. 325.

The most valuable productions in the class of descriptive poetry, are those which intermingle with their scenery SENTIMENT of a religious, moral, or pathetic cast: without such an intermixture, indeed, the delineation of Nature would lose half its charms, and nearly all its propriety and utility. We are naturally led from the consideration of the beauteous world around us to the contemplation of the Deity, and to reflections on the duties and pursuits of our fellow-creatures; and in proportion as these are skil-

fully and appositely introduced, will be the success of the poet, and the interest excited. Thomson, Dyer, Beattie, Burns*, and Cowper, are all remarkable for their address and felicity, in interweaving moral and ethic ideas and episodes, with their views of rural life; and in pursuing a similar design, Mr. Bloomfield has exhibited much taste and judgment. Throughout the "Farmer's Boy" there runs a pure vein of moral and religious sentiment, together with a spirit of humanity and laudable independence, which strongly arrest the attention and feelings of the reader.

Humanity to the brute creation, though a duty frequently insisted upon, has been in too many instances shamefully violated by caprice and fashion. In the poem before us its amiable author has not only seized every opportunity of awakening our compassion for the animals we employ, but has poured forth the warmest invective against those who, void of sympathy, feel no hesitation in wantonly inflicting the severest deprivations and tortures. The sufferings of the Post-horse he has described in a manner truly affecting, and the cruel practice of *docking* is thus very justly condemned: —

* From a letter which I have lately received from Mr. Loft, I take the liberty of inserting the following interesting passage: "The Duke of Grafton, being highly pleased with 'The Farmer's Boy,' had desired to see the Author. He has seen him. Part of the conversation with the Duke and Duchess, and one of the young Ladies, turned upon what books he would wish to read. You will be pleased to hear that the first which he mentioned was, Burns' Poems, which he had not yet had an opportunity of reading."

— By th' unclouded sun are hourly bred
The bold assailants that surround thy head,
Poor, patient Ball! and with insulting wing
Roar in thy ears, and dart the piercing sting;
In thy behalf the crest-wav'd boughs avail
More than thy short-clipt remnant of a tail,
A moving mockery, a useless name,
A living proof of cruelty and shame.
Shame to the man, whatever fame he bore,
Who took from thee what man can ne'er restore —
Thy weapon of defence, thy chiefest good,
When swarming flies contending suck thy blood.
Summer, l. 205.

That the love of rational independence, which usually accompanies Genius, and which necessarily spurns at all flattery and adulation, has regulated the conduct and the Muse of Mr. Bloomfield, will be evident from the passage I have now to quote. It is, indeed, to this very spirit that almost all the human virtues are annexed, whilst the surest foundation of vice is that abject and self-degrading submission, which wealth and pride too often endeavour to exact, but which no individual, who has a just value for himself, should ever pay: for,

Jove made it certain that whatever day
Makes man a slave, takes half his worth away.'
Pope's Homer.

The poet, after celebrating the fame and fidelity of an old Fox-hound, introduces a most animated apostrophe.

Pride of thy race! with worth far less than thine,
Full many human leaders daily shine!

Less faith, less constancy, less gen'rous zeal! —
Then no disgrace mine humble verse shall feel,
Where not one lying line to riches bows,
Or poison'd sentiment from rancour flows;
Nor flowers are strewn around Ambition's car: —
An honest dog 's a nobler theme by far.

Autumn, l. 319.

The disappointment which Giles experiences from his playmates, who had promised to meet him at the hovel where he sheltered himself whilst watching the birds, and for whom he had roasted a quantity of sloes, occasions some very just and apposite reflections on the cruelty of exciting expectation without a determined resolution to gratify it. The versification is correct and sweet.

Look then from trivial up to greater woes;
From the poor bird-boy with his roasted sloes,
To where the dungeon'd mourner heaves the sigh;
Where not one cheering sun-beam meets his eye.
Tho' ineffectual pity thine may be,
No wealth, no pow'r, to set the captive free;
Though *only* to thy ravish'd *sight* is given
The golden path that HOWARD trod to heaven;
Thy slights can make the wretched more forlorn,
And deeper drive affliction's barbed thorn.
Say not, "I'll come and cheer thy gloomy cell
With news of dearest friends; how good, how well:
I'll be a joyful herald to thine heart:"
Then fail, and play the worthless trifler's part,
To sip flat pleasures from thy glass's brim,
And waste the precious hour that 's due to him.

Autumn, l. 231.

The conversation which the poet represents as taking place round the Christmas fire is enlivened by a very pleasing contrast between the Sea-boy and the Farmer's Boy, ushered in by the following very humane queries which Mr. Austin is supposed to put to Giles, who is sitting "joint tenant of the corner stool."

Left ye your bleating charge, when daylight fled,
Near where the hay-stack lifts its snowy head?
Whose fence of bushy furze, so close and warm,
May stop the slanting bullets of the storm.
For, hark! it blows; a dark and dismal night:
Heaven guide the trav'ller's fearful steps aright!
Now from the woods, mistrustful, and sharp-ey'd,
The *Fox* in silent darkness seems to glide,
Stealing around us, list'ning as he goes,
If chance the Cock or stamm'ring Capon crows,
Or Goose, or nodding Duck, should darkling cry,
As if appriz'd of lurking danger nigh:
Destruction waits them, Giles, if e'er you fail
To bolt their doors against the driving gale.
Strew'd you (still mindful of the unsheltered head)
Burdens of straw, the cattle's welcome bed?
Thine heart should feel what thou may'st hourly see,
That DUTY'S *basis is* HUMANITY.
Of pain's unsavoury cup though thou may'st taste,
(The wrath of winter from the bleak north-east,)
Thine utmost suff'rings in the coldest day
A period terminates, and joys repay.
Perhaps e'en now, whilst here these joys we boast,
Full many a bark rides down the neighb'ring coast,
Where the high northern waves tremendous roar,
Drove down by blasts from Norway's icy shore,
The *Sea-boy* there, less fortunate than thou,
Feels all thy pains in all the gusts that blow;

His freezing hands now drench'd, now dry, by turns;
Now lost, now seen, the distant light that burns,
On some tall cliff uprais'd, a flaming guide,
That throws its friendly radiance o'er the tide.
His labours cease not with declining day,
But toils and perils mark his wat'ry way;
And whilst in peaceful dreams secure we lie,
The ruthless whirlwinds rage along the sky,
Round his head whistling:—and shalt thou repine,
Whilst this protecting roof still shelters thine?
Winter, l. 89.

In the latter part of this quotation, and especially in the four concluding lines, the verse is well woven, whilst the imagery is throughout distinct and impressive.

We have already displayed in the little narrative of the Mad Girl no inferior powers in awakening the tender emotions of pity and compassion; and we purpose now transcribing an instance or two of that sublime and unaffected piety which in his earliest years our rural poet had imbibed amid the shades of Euston.

There Giles, untaught, and unrepining, stray'd
Through every copse, and grove, and winding glade;
There his first thoughts to Nature's charms inclin'd,
That stamp devotion on th' enquiring mind.
Spring, l. 43.

The annexed moon-light piece includes, like several other scenes in the poem, a solemn and impressive reference to the Creator; and the line which I have distinguished by Italics conveys a most delightful image to the mind. Giles

with sauntering step is proceeding, ere he goes to rest, to count his little flock.

Low on the utmost bound'ry of the sight,
The rising vapours catch *the silver light*;
Thence Fancy measures, as *they parting fly*,
Which first *will throw its shadow on the eye*,
Passing *the source of light*; and *thence away*,
Succeeded quick by brighter *still than they*.
For yet above these wafted clouds are *seen*
(In a remoter sky, still more serene,)
Others, detach'd in ranges thro' the air,
Spotless as snow, and countless as they're fair;
Scatter'd immensely wide from east to west,
The beauteous semblance of a flock at rest.
These, to the raptur'd mind, aloud proclaim
Their MIGHTY SHEPHERD'S everlasting name;
"And" thus the loit'rer's utmost stretch of soul
Climbs the still clouds, or passes those that roll,
And loos'd *Imagination* soaring goes
High o'er his home, and all his little woes.
Winter, l. 249.

Again, at the conclusion of the volume, where Giles is rejoicing on the prospect of returning Spring, occurs another passage of similar import, and expressed with equal piety and fervour.

——————— Sunshine, Health, and Joy,
Play round, and cheer the elevated Boy!
"Another SPRING!" his heart exulting cries;
"Another YEAR! with promised blessings rise!—
ETERNAL POWER! from whom those blessings flow,
Teach me still more to wonder, more to know:
Seed-time and *Harvest* let me see again;
Wander the *leaf-strewn* wood, the *frozen* plain:

Let the first flower, corn-waving field, plain, tree,
Here round my home, still lift my soul to THEE;
And let me ever, 'midst thy bounties, raise
An humble note of thankfulness and praise!" —
Winter, l. 383.

From the review we have now taken of the "FARMER'S BOY" it will be evident, I think, that owing to its harmony and sweetness of versification, its benevolence of sentiment, and originality of imagery, it is entitled to rank very high in the class of descriptive and pastoral poetry, and that, most probably, it will descend to posterity with a character and with encomia similar to what has been the endeavour of these essays to attach to it.

It must be also a circumstance of peculiar gratification to those who from their opulence and taste are disposed to patronise and foster the efforts of rising genius, that the author of this beautiful poem is, in a moral light, an object of the most decided approbation. That amiable simplicity, that tender enthusiasm, and pathetic piety, which diffuse over his work a lustre so mild and fascinating, have been not less apparent in his life and conduct. To such a poet, therefore, and to such a man, that generous attention which is so honourably the characteristic of my countrymen, will, I have no doubt, be paid: and should the hours which I have devoted to the "Farmer's Boy" prove in the smallest degree instrumental in displaying its merits, or promoting its circulation, I shall

deem them well employed;—a tribute due to the abilities and the modest virtues of its author.

A Latin version of the first season of this beautiful poem, has been lately given to the world by the Reverend William Clubbe. From its fidelity and elegance, it cannot fail of being highly acceptable to foreigners, and the literati of our own island; and it is to be hoped that the remaining parts, which I have had the pleasure of perusing in MS., and can recommend as finished with equal if not superior felicity, may shortly be committed to the press. *

The following specimen, descriptive of lambs at play, will enable my readers to appreciate for themselves, the taste and classical execution of the translator:

Agnorum ludi, et approximans fatum.

Dicite, sensistis qui gaudia pectore ab imo
Ver venit ut ridens viridi redivivus amictû;
Dicite, non animam tangit vos mira voluptas
Quum leviter saliens trans vallem cursitat agnus,
Aut glomerans lateri et mirans deligitur agmen?
Quem spectare juvat (sapienti et lusibus istis
Arridere datur) juvenis ludibria felis,
Siste gradum; innocuis nam si laus ulla daretur
Ludis; si valeant meditantem inducere mentem,
Concede his umbris; hic talia gaudia mecum,
Naturæ hos ludos placidus spectare maneto.
Incipiunt pauci breve sed certamen alacre,
Segnitiesque fugit campum pudibunda relinquens:
Undique jam socii glomerantur; provocat unus;
Acriter acceptum est; et dum de carcere mitti
Ardent, haud segnes saltant et millia ludunt.

* These have been since published.

" Maturate fugam; virês nunc promite vestras,"
Ceu captiva recens volucris, clamare videntur.
Veloces fugiunt validique, gradusque resultans
Ictibus alternis trepidantia gramina tundit.
Nunc transversa petunt, nunc fortes collibus instant,
Talparumque opera evertunt fragrantia thymo:
Nunc et anhelantes sistunt, sed vix pede certo;
Motâ fronde timent, cursus iterumque capessunt.
Sed si forte magis solito sævire procella
Cœperit, atque rosas violento turbine perflet;
Per totum subito trepidatur, et, agmine fracto,
Dispersi fugiunt, dispersi floris ad instar.
Ah rosa macrescens! agnorum tristis imago!
Fato eadem fragiles pereunt ineunte juventâ.
Innocuas mentes, vitas sine crimine, frustra
Exponunt; frustra balat flens anxia mater,
" Parce pio generi:" pastor mox arcet ab agnis
Matribus, et sociis, partû, ludisque relictis.

Ver de Agricolæ Puero, Anglico poemate celeberrimo, excerptum, et in morem Georgicorum in versus Latinos redditum. Editio secunda, aucta et emendata. Autore Gulielmo Clubbe, LL.B. 8vo. 1s. 6d. Cadell et Davies.

No. XLI.

— Qui legitimum cupiet fecisse poëma,
Cum tabulis animum censoris sumet honesti.
HORATIUS.

How often, and to what extent a favourite turn of expression in a celebrated poet, a Virgil, a Shakspeare, or a Milton, for instance, may be imitated, no critics, I believe, have yet attempted to decide. To copy, however, the style or diction of a great author, is certainly less servile than to retail his thoughts, though clothed in more appropriate and more elegant language. In a modern bard, provided the imagery be new, no censure, perhaps, attaches to him, when his production is viewed in an insulated light, should he have adopted the admired, though well-known phraseology of a popular ancient, either of his own or any other country. But, as every disciple of the Muses has a claim to a similar privilege, it is obvious that a beautiful turn of expression may be so frequently imitated as, if not individually, yet collectively, to occasion disgust. The Ode annexed to these observations, and which was first published in 1793, though but few copies were then thrown into circulation, originally commenced with an

imitation of that exquisite passage in Milton, "'Sweet is the breath of morn," &c. to which I was led, without considering the number of preceding imitators, by an enthusiastic admiration of the poet. I am now convinced that the peculiar turn of expression in these lines has already been transferred to a due quantity of poetical pages, and that no beauty, however great, should be copied ad infinitum.

To criticism, when candid, I am ever ready to do homage; partial to, and occasionally exercising it myself, I have learnt to appreciate its value and gratefully to acknowledge its assistance. With pleasure therefore I confess that I was induced to ascertain how numerous were these imitations in consequence of the strictures of my Reviewers, in deference to whose opinion I have now withdrawn the passage. "'The Ode to Laura," observes the Analytical Critic, "contains much tender sentiment, and many delicate lines. The latter part of the first stanza of this ode is sweetly poetical, though 'Sweet is the breath of morn,' &c. of Milton, has been so repeatedly imitated, that it is become trite, and adds, in our opinion, nothing to the worth of the passage."* The Reviewer in the British Critic thus confirms the preceding decision. "Ode the sixth to Laura," says he, "opens with much too close and palpable an imitation of Milton's 'Sweet is the breath of morn,' &c. which occupies the chief part of the first stanza. Yet this ode has considerable merits,

* Analytical Review for July, 1793.

and of such a kind as seems to prove, that the writer's talents turn rather to the pathetic than the sublime." *

It should be recollected, however, that in these very lines, Milton is himself but an imitator of Theocritus, though he has greatly expanded and improved his original. Warton, the best editor of Theocritus, is of this opinion; and Polwhele, in his translation, notices the pleasing repetition of the Sicilian poet, as the foundation of the beauty in Paradise Lost. For the sake of immediate comparison, I shall give the passage in the version of Mr. Polwhele.

Sweet is the breath of cows — the breath of steers —
Sweet, too, the bullock's voice the herdsman hears!
And, in the dewy vale, at evening-close,
Sweet the hill echoes, when the heifer lows!
Sweet too at noon the shade embowering deep,
Lull'd by the murmur of a stream to sleep.

Idyll. 8.

With regard to the speech of Eve in Milton, I am tempted to adopt the language of Mr. Wakefield, and to declare, that "because English poetry has nothing more exquisite to produce, I shall give it at full length for the gratification of the reader and myself." †

Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
With charm of earliest birds: pleasant the sun,
When first on this delightful land he spreads

* British Critic for November, 1793.
† Notes on Gray, p. 184.

His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
Glist'ring with dew: fragrant the fertile earth
After soft showers; and sweet the coming on
Of grateful evening mild; then silent night
With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
And these the gems of heaven, her starry train.
But neither breath of morning, when she ascends
With charm of earliest birds; nor rising sun
On this delightful land; nor herb, fruit, flower,
Glist'ring with dew; nor fragrance after showers;
Nor grateful evening mild; nor silent night
With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon,
Or glittering star-light, without thee is sweet.
Book iv. 641.

Of the various imitations of these very melodious verses I shall select but two, which, for their pathos and beauty, cannot fail to attract admiration. The first consists of only four lines, and is taken from the Ode for Music, by Gray.

Sweet is the breath of vernal shower,
The bee's collected treasures sweet,
Sweet music's melting fall, but sweeter yet
The still small voice of gratitude.

The second, which is more extended and elaborate, though perhaps equally pathetic and harmonious, is from Hayley's Ode, inscribed to Mr. Howard, a composition that breathes the very spirit of philanthropy, and which has the singular felicity of recording a character, whose virtues could not be exaggerated, even by the warmest poetic encomium.

Sweet is the joy, when Science flings
Her light on philosophic thought;
When Genius, with keen ardour, springs
To clasp the lovely truth he sought:
Sweet is the joy, when Rapture's fire
Flows from the spirit of the lyre;
When Liberty and Virtue roll
Spring-tides of fancy o'er the poet's soul,
That waft his flying bark thro' seas above the Pole.

Sweet the delight, when the gall'd heart
Feels Consolation's lenient hand,
Bind up the wound from Fortune's dart
With Friendship's life-supporting band!
And sweeter still, and far above
These fainter joys, when purest Love
The soul his willing captive keeps!
When he in bliss the melting spirit steeps,
Who drops delicious tears, and wonders that he weeps.

But not the brightest joy, which Arts,
In floods of mental light, bestow;
Nor what firm Friendship's zeal imparts,
Blest antidote of bitterest woe!
Nor those that Love's sweet hours dispense,
Can equal the ecstatic sense,
When, swelling to a fond excess,
The grateful praises of reliev'd distress,
Re-echoed thro' the heart, the soul of Bounty bless.

After such originals, and such imitations, it certainly was unnecessary, and altogether hazardous, to risk another copy. As the reader, however, may possess some inclination to see the rejected lines, I shall insert them in this place; they will, no doubt, corroborate the opinion of the professional critics, and may be

compared with those which have been substituted in their room.

Sweet is the mild moon, chaste and white,
And list'ning to the ocean's roar,
And sweet the blue wave foaming light,
And dying on the hollow shore;
But not the mild moon, chaste and white,
And list'ning to the ocean's roar,
Nor yet the blue wave foaming light,
And dying on the hollow shore,
Can, &c. &c.

ODE TO LAURA.

Dificile est longum subitò deponere amorem;
Dificile est. CATULLUS.

1.

No, not the ruby's crimson rays,
Nor the green em'rald's milder hue,
No, not the diamond's living blaze,
Nor the chaste sapphire's lovely blue;
No, not the freezing star, whose light
Streams beauteous thro' the vault of heav'n,
Cheering the weary pilgrim's sight,
Wide from his track by tempests driv'n,
Can with that sweet expression vie,
Which beams from Love's enamour'd eye,
And thrills thro' all his frame:
No, not the Muse, tho' mid her lay,
Warm Genius dart his brightest ray,
And light his purest flame.

Can hope, her noblest sons among,
To equal the enchanting song,
The melting tones that flow from Love's delicious tongue.

2.

Oh, do not turn those eyes away!
Ah, Laura, shed their sweetness here,
For much I love their modest ray,
And much I love their tender tear;
Nor, oh, to draw those lips aside,
I pray thee do not, do not try —
Still must I press them — do not chide,
If still to press those lips I sigh;
Yet not thine eye so lovely blue,
Or lip embath'd in balmy dew,
More raptures e'er impart,
Than when, to other beauties blind,
I only mark thy polish'd mind,
I only view thine heart:
Yet more I love to hear thee speak,
To hear thy gentle accents break,
Mild as the mellow strains oft heard at evening meek.

3.

And wilt thou, Laura, when from thee
I part, perchance, to meet no more,
When far upon a foreign sea
I sail, to seek a foreign shore;
Ah, wilt thou then, thus distant, pour
One tear, one hapless tear for me,
For one who lov'd the passing hour
But when it left a thought of thee:
And wilt thou —— yes, when life is o'er,
When then no longer shall deplore

This heart its ill-starr'd love,
When not a pang its frame shall pierce,
When not a hope its sorrows nurse,
And not a passion move;
Then wilt thou —— and the tear shall start,
Then wilt thou mourn this wounded heart,
That lov'd, ah, dearly lov'd! nor could its griefs impart.

4.

Soft as the dews of autumn weep,
When thirsty all the vales are still,
Pure as the unsunn'd snows that sleep,
And gleam upon the northern hill;
So soft, so pure the gentle sigh,
That swelling heav'd that tender breast —
So pure — each ruder thought must die,
And calm the turbid spirit rest.
Not softer steals the wanton breeze
Amid the foliage of the trees,
Amid the flow'rets bloom,
When meek they lift the dewy head,
And slow the grateful moisture shed,
And breathe the rich perfume,
What time o'er yonder woody dell,
Whilst pausing slow the evening bell,
The red sun ling'ring gleams, then takes his last farewell.

5.

Blest is the cottage youth at eve,
Who, whilst the moon-beam lights the shade,
Shall in his faithful arms receive
The trembling, blushing, willing maid:
And blest is she, that willing maid,
Who, all her blooming charms resign'd,

Still finds, nor wish nor vow betray'd,
For still the favour'd youth is kind:
Ah! blest indeed, thus love repaid,
Blest is the youth who loves the maid
And is belov'd again!
Tho' not for me, in Fate's dark round,
Not one such flatt'ring scene be found,
Not one full pause from pain;
Yet, Laura, not for worlds would I
The sweet, the pensive pleasure fly,
To dream, to muse of thee, to fold mine arms,
and sigh.

6.

Curs'd be the wretch, tho' from his view
All hope of fond possession fade,
Who bids to each soft thought adieu,
And can forget the tender maid:
For him, no tear shall bathe the eye,
For him, may no sweet accent breathe,
Pale in his arms enjoyment die,
And Love, contemning, drop his wreath:
I would not wan Indiff'rence choose,
I would not those sensations lose
That thrill the breast of Hope;
No, nor those gloomy raptures fly,
Which lift the mingling passions high,
And give them ample scope;
For all that Wisdom ever gave,
For all the hoarding fool can save,
For all that Splendour loves, or blood-stain'd
Despots rave.

7.

Come then, O Love! from that sweet isle,
Where, as the purple beams retire,

The soft enamour'd wood-nymphs smile,
And heave the sigh of warm desire:
O come! and thro' my willing soul,
Still, still, thy wild contagion dart,
Still bid the glowing tumult roll,
And give to bleed this wounded heart:
This heart so wounded, that to deem
It ere could spurn the tender theme,
A theme so tender spurn,
Were vain, were hopeless as to prove,
That apathy could melt to love,
Or pity cease to mourn;
No, my lov'd Laura! ere from thee
Again my wounded heart be free,
Pale sleeps that wounded heart beneath the grass-grown lea.

8.

Yet tell me, say why thus severe?
Say, Laura, why those charms withhold?
No, tell me not — I will not hear —
O be the ruthless tale untold!
I know my fate — to love in vain —
To love — its mutual bliss to fly —
To love — its fiercest pangs sustain —
To sink beneath the Tyrant's eye:
Then ah, farewell! nor blame the youth
Whose lips express'd, with artless truth,
The wish that Hope had giv'n —
Oh, when at eve, the setting beam
Shall on the tomb's pale mansions gleam,
Whilst mourn the gales of heav'n;
Oh fail not then, with pity blest,
To strew with flowers my clay-cold breast,
To breathe one tender sigh, and bid my spirit rest.

In the annexed Ode to Pity, of which STERNE forms the most conspicuous figure, an appeal is made, not to the life, but to the *pathetic* writings of that eccentric Genius. His *ludicrous* productions, a compound of quaintness and obscene allusion, and, as it has lately appeared, possessing but little originality, I consider as forming no part of the basis on which his literary reputation rests; and his personal conduct I understand to have been accompanied with a levity very inconsistent with the profession he had chosen to exercise. It is to Sterne, merely as the author of *Le Fevre*, *Maria*, and the *Monk*, compositions which breathe the purest morality, and display the most touching simplicity, both in sentiment and style, that the following lines are addressed: to one, of whom, in this capacity, every member of the republic of letters may, with propriety, say, —

Sterne, the quick tear, that checks our wond'ring smile,
In sudden pause, or unexpected story,
Owns thy true mast'ry; and *Le Fevre*'s woes,
Maria's wand'rings, and the *Pris'ner*'s throes,*
Fix thee conspicuous on the shrine of glory.

FERRIAR.

*

ODE TO PITY.

O lachrymarum fons, tenero sacros
Ducentium ortus ex animo; quater
Felix! in imo qui scatentem
Pectore te, pia Nympha, sensit. GRAY.

O Thou, whose sweetly melting eye,
Whose heaving heart, and frequent sigh,
The soul of sorrow breathe,
O Nymph, to each soft sense alive,
For thee, with many a tint, I strive
To bind a suiting wreathe.

For thou canst still my throbbing breast,
Canst calm the ruder thought to rest,
And bid the milder glow;
I'll follow where thy footsteps rove,
Where'er for grief, or pining love
Thou giv'st the tear to flow.

Slow winding thro' thy magic cell,
I hear the solemn-breathing shell
Its mellow tones prolong;
And, trembling to each dying fall,
Around, at thy subduing call,
The tender passions throng.

And O, down yon sequester'd vale,
As wildly swells the hollow gale,
What mingled murmurs speak!
Ah sure, from some deluded maid,
Some wand'rer of the lonely glade,
You sad complainings break.

Oh sweet enthusiast! ever near
To bathe, with thy delicious tear,

The woundings of the heart;
Now, from thy soul-dejecting lyre,
O virgin of each soft desire!
Now bid thy sorrows part.

O'er him, to Death's cold arm assign'd,
For whose green turf shall fancy bind
The wreaths that never fade,
And where, as eve's mild dews descend,
Sad forms of meek-ey'd mercy bend,
And bless the hallow'd shade.

Where still, as shuts the eye of day,
As slow the pilgrim takes his way,
Where twilight glimm'rings dwell,
He starts to hear the frequent sigh,
And wonders at the strange sounds nigh
That sweep the haunted dell.

Where art thou, Sterne? O spirit sweet!
To what lov'd scene dost thou retreat,
To pour thy pensive tale?
There, on the wild shore flitting round,
O'er what rapt sprites, in dying sound,
Do thy soft tones prevail?

The tender tear shall Petrarch shed,
And, mourning o'er Le Fevre's bed,
The sigh of love repress;
And sad Rousseau, to passion dear,
And plaintive Otway, pausing near,
Thy gentle shade caress?

From fair Fidele's grassy grave,
Shall hapless Collins haunt thy cave,
And breathe his magic song?
For whom, on Arun's sedgy side,
Still loud the notes of sorrow glide
At eve the woods along.

Or Shakspeare,' bard divine! from where
The ling'ring thunders rend the air,
And red-tongu'd lightnings play,
From where on yonder clifted brow,
He views the mingling war below,
Glad take his silent way?

Oh master of the human soul!
Fast did the stream of pity roll,
And bathe thy manly breast,
As lost Maria, rapt in care
And hopeless love, to thy sad ear
Her wand'rings wild address'd.

O yes, while breathes thy tender page,
Yes, Sterne, thro' every distant age
Shall steal the heart-felt sigh;
And still, to thy meek sorrows true,
Still warmly flow the hallow'd dew,
That starts in Pity's eye.

Ah, maiden lov'd! from earliest youth
To thee I've vow'd unblemish'd truth,
Each trembling pulse is thine;
To thee first lisp'd my artless Muse,
And cull'd for thee, of choicest hues,
The flowers that deck thy shrine.

Alas me! to thoughtless mirth assign'd,
If e'er I fail thy wounds to bind,
And leave the wretch to weep,
May I, in sorrow, beg my bread,
And dead to joy, to pity dead,
In dull oblivion sleep.

The following Epitaph, the poetical part of which, at the request of the relations of

the deceased Lady, I have lately been induced to compose, can lay claim, I believe, to the uncommon merit, of a close adherence to matter of fact. Mrs. Gastrell was a woman singularly pious and amiable, most liberally yet judiciously charitable and benevolent, who waited not until the hand of Death necessarily transferred her wealth, but some years anterior to that event, distributed among her relatives sixteen thousand pounds. She brought up also, and under her immediate care, several young persons, to whom she left property proportioned to their expectations and the style of education they had received.

The Epitaph, which is inscribed on an elegant Sarcophagus, in the Cathedral Church of Lichfield, will still further display the worth and utility of her character.

J. G. died Oct. 30. 1791,
Aged 81.
Sacred to the memory of Jane,
Daughter of Sir Thomas Aston, of Aston,
Baronet,
And Widow of the reverend Francis Gastrell,
Clerk,
Who, to the last moment of her life,
Was constantly employed in acts of secret
and extensive charity,
And on her death bequeathed
To numerous benevolent Institutions
A considerable portion of her property;
This monument is erected
By her five Nephews and three Nieces,
Who partook equally and amply
Of her Bounty.

Let not thine alms, the holy Jesus cried,
Be seen of men, or dealt with conscious pride;
So shall the Lord, whose eye pervades the breast,
For thee unfold the mansions of the bless'd.

O'er Her, whose life this precept held in view,
A friend to Want when each false friend withdrew,
May these chaste lines, to genuine worth assign'd,
Pour the full tribute of a grateful mind.

Sweet as, at noontide's sultry beam, the show'r
That steals refreshing o'er the wither'd flower,
Her silent aid, by soothing pity giv'n,
Sank thro' the heart — the dew of gracious Heav'n.
Deeds such as these, pure Shade, shall ever bloom,
Shall live thro' time, and glow beyond the tomb.

Thro' thee, the Orphan owns parental care,
Bends the glad knee, and breathes the frequent prayer;
Thro' thee, the Debtor, from despondence fled,
Clasps his fond babes, and hails his native shed;
Thro' thee, the Slave, unbound his massive chain,
Shouts with new joy, and lives a man again;
Thro' thee, the Savage, on a distant shore,
His Saviour hears, and droops with doubt no more.

O thou! who ling'ring here shalt heave the sigh,
The warm tear trembling on thy pensive eye,
Go, and the couch of hopeless sorrow tend,
The poor man's guardian, and the widow's friend;
Go, and the path, which Aston lately trod,
Shall guide thy footsteps to the throne of God.

No. XLII.

Thou shalt not *all* die.
HERRICK upon himself, p. 165.

IT is only within a short period, that due attention has been paid to the minor poets of the seventeenth century; round the names of Shakspeare, Jonson, Cowley, Milton, Waller, Denham, and Dryden, a lustre so brilliant had been diffused, that the reputation of numerous poets of the same age was nearly lost in their splendour. In the course of the last thirty years, however, a spirit of literary research, and a warm partiality for the whole body of our elder poetry, have been strongly awakened; the works of *Davies* and of *Hall*, of *Phineas* and *Giles Fletcher*, of *Browne* and *Carew*, of *Suckling* and *Marvel*, have been republished; various and well-selected extracts, from a multitude of authors contemporary with these, have likewise made their appearance in the Collections of Percy, of Headley, and of Ellis; and Anderson, in his edition of the British Poets, has, with great propriety, introduced many a neglected though highly poetic writer of this period.

Notwithstanding these exertions, however,

there still remain involved in partial obscurity some votaries of the Muse, who deserve a better fate. I would particularly mention, as entitled to rank foremost in the list, the names of *George Wither*, *James Shirley*, and ROBERT HERRICK. Of the two former, some beautiful portions have been given to the world by Percy, Gilchrist *, and Ellis; yet much is left highly worthy of preservation. Wither was a most versatile and voluminous writer, extremely unequal, and, for the most part, very coarse and colloquial in his language; yet are there dispersed through his bulky tomes, and especially through his *Juvenilia* †, many passages admirably picturesque ‡, and many amatory

* Vide Gentleman's Magazine, vol. lxx. p. 1149.

† Juvenilia, a Collection of those Poems which were heretofore imprinted and written by George Wither. London, printed for Robert Allott, in Paul's Church[illegible] the signe of the Grey-hound, 1626.

‡ Few lines can be produced more impre[illegible] descriptive than those marked by Italics in the following [illegible]ssage. Speaking of his Muse he observes,

> Her divine skill taught me this,
> That from every thing I saw,
> I could some invention draw:
> And raise pleasure to her height,
> Through the meanest object's sight.
> By the murmur of a spring,
> Or the least bough's rustling;
> By a Daisy whose leaves spread,
> Shut when Tytan goes to bed;
> Or a shady bush or tree,
> She could more infuse in me,
> Than all Nature's beauties can,
> In some other wiser man
> By her help I also now,
> Make this churlish place allow

songs of great elegance. Of these, a very pleasing little volume might be made, and I have understood it is the intention of Mr. Southey to present such a selection to the public. * Shirley having been principally known as a dramatic poet †, his smaller pieces, which were printed in 1646, were comparatively little noticed; they merit republication. ‡

Some things that may sweeten gladness
In the very gall of sadness.
The dull loneness, the black shade,
That these hanging vaults have made,
The strange Music of the waves,
Beating on these hollow caves,
This black Den which Rocks emboss
Over-grown with eldest Moss.
The rude Portals that give light,
More to Terror than Delight.
This my chamber of Neglect,
Wall'd about with disrespect.
From all these and this dull air,
A fit object for Despair,
She hath taught me by her might,
To draw comfort and delight.

The Shepherd's Hunting, Eglogue iv.

* Although this has not appeared from the pen of Mr. Southey, yet some reprints of the best parts of the *Juvenilia* of Wither have been given us from the press of Messrs. Longman and Co.; among which will be found "Fidelia," and "Faire Virtue, the Mistresse of Philarete," two of the most original and beautiful productions of this once-neglected poet.

† He published thirty-nine plays between 1629 and 1660.

‡ I give the following as a specimen of the poetry of Shirley.

TO ODELIA.

1.

Health to my fair Odelia, some that know
How many months are past

If Wither and Shirley, however, may be said to have been unjustly neglected, the charge will apply, with much greater truth, to the productions of Robert Herrick, a poet scarce even known by name, and of whom, until very lately, the brief notices of Phillips*, Anthony Wood†, and Grainger‡, were all that preserved his existence from oblivion. It was in the Gentleman's Magazine for 1796 and 1797§, that the greater part of the lovers of poetry of the present age first learnt, that our bard had ever written; here are given some additional events

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Since I beheld thy lovely brow
Would count an age at least;
But unto me,
Whose thoughts are still on thee,
I vow
By thy black eyes, 'tis but an hour ago.

2.

The Mistress I pronounce but poor in bliss,
That, when her Servant parts,
Gives not as much with her last kiss
As will maintain two hearts,
Till both do meet
To taste what else is sweet,
Is't fit
Time measure Love, or our Affection it?

The metre of this little ode, though singular, is not unpleasing. There is, however, a quaintness in its construction, very commonly to be found in the poets of the seventeenth century.

* Theatrum Poetarum.

† Athenæ Oxonienses, vol. ii. p. 122.

‡ Grainger's Biographical History, vol. ii. p. 309.

§ Vol. lxvi. part i. p. 461. — Part ii. pp. 645. and 736. — Vol. lxvii. part i. p. 102.

and anecdotes of his life; and in the "Specimens of the early English Poets," are four extracts from his volume of poems. *

This includes all which has been hitherto done, toward rendering this forgotten poet the justice he deserves. † The perusal of his worm-eaten book, which was lately placed in my hands by a very estimable and ingenious friend ‡, has induced me to come forward, with the view of presenting to the public such specimens of his poetical powers, as will probably excite no little curiosity as to the means by which merit, so decided, in the departments he embraced, could, for such a length of time, be merged in the deepest obscurity. After premising, therefore, what is known of the life of our author, I shall annex some general observations on his Writings and Genius, which, I trust, will be fully confirmed by the many beautiful lines his volume will enable me to produce.

Robert Herrick, though of a family of

* Vol. iii. p. 281.

† I should have observed that Winstanley has also mentioned Herrick in his Lives of the Poets, but he has servilely and even literally copied Phillips.

‡ Dr. Henry Reeve. — Since the last edition of these volumes, this amiable and accomplished physician and scholar has paid the debt of nature. He was snatched from us at the early age of thirty-four; a privation which has been felt with uncommon severity, not only by his friends and relatives, to whom he was deservedly most dear, but by all who were acquainted with his singular proficiency in, and ardent love for, literature and science, and who, consequently, looked forward to the result of this study and attachment, as to a great and assured benefit about to be conferred on society at no distant day.

some consequence and antiquity in Leicestershire, was born in London, being the fourth son of Nicholas Herrick, of St. Vedast, Foster-Lane, by Julia Stone, his wife. The poet himself, indeed, has recorded his birth-place, and the Christian name of his mother.

> The golden Cheapside, where the earth
> Of *Julia* Herrick gave me birth. *

He was baptized August 24th, 1591 †, but of what College he became a member, whether of Oxford or Cambridge, remains somewhat doubtful. Anthony Wood says he was elected Fellow of All-Souls' College, Oxford, from that of St. John's, in the year 1628; but a correspondent in the Gentleman's Magazine for 1797, whose initials are J. N., affirms Wood to have been mistaken: there was, indeed, he observes, a Robert Herrick, of St. John's, at Oxford, who was a lieutenant in the army, and died at Wesel, in 1639; but Robert, the poet, he attempts to prove, was a Fellow-commoner of St. John's College, Cambridge, from 1615 to 1617; in corroboration of which assertion, he produces a *note of hand* and *two letters*, signed by the poet, written at Cambridge, and addressed to his uncle Sir William Herrick: the last letter is dated Trinitie Hall, Cambridge, to which college he had removed, according to his own account, from motives of economy, and with the view, likewise, of studying the law.

* Hesperides, p. 375.

† Mr. Ellis has unaccountably placed the birth of Herrick in the year 1623. See his Chronological List of Poets.

Upon what authority these documents are founded is not mentioned; nor can the question be settled by any reference to the poetry of our author, for, though many of his pieces are addressed to his friends and relations; no information escapes as to the place of his education. It is certain, however, that if he commenced the study of the law, he soon afterwards relinquished it, and entered into the church; for, through the patronage of the Earl of Exeter, he was, on October 1st, 1629, presented by Charles the First (on the promotion of Dr. Barnaby Potter to the bishopric of Carlisle) to the vicarage of Dean-Prior, in Devonshire. * He was then, says Eugenio †, M. A., though Anthony Wood declares he could not find that he had ever taken a Degree.

In this retreat he spent nineteen years undisturbed, and the greater part of his volume of poems was, probably, composed during this period. There is one piece, however, which bears a date earlier than his acceptance of the vicarage by two years, "A Dialogue betwixt Horace and Lydia, translated anno 1627, and set by Mr. Ro. Ramsey," and which was, perhaps, the first attempt to naturalise this celebrated Ode. His residence in Devon, notwithstanding his being beloved and admired by the neighbouring gentry for his wit, his learning, and his genius, appears by no means to have been rendered agreeable to him, and he has

* Rymer, Fœd. tom. xix. p. 138.

† A writer in the Gentleman's Magazine, vol. lxvi. p. 461.

vented his spleen against the county in several parts of his work. The following lines, which paint his discontent, and allude to the fertility of his genius in this situation, are, as illustrative of a part of his life, worthy of quotation.

> More discontents I never had
> Since I was born, than here,
> Where I have been, and still am sad,
> In this dull Devonshire:
> Yet justly too I must confess,
> I ne'er invented such
> Ennobled numbers for the Press,
> Than where I loath'd so much.

In another part of his volume he has still more emphatically expressed his dislike of the neighbourhood of his vicarage. In a little poem, entitled "His Returne to London," he exclaims:

> From the dull confines of the drooping West,
> To see the day spring from the pregnant East,
> Ravisht in spirit, I come, nay more, I fly
> To thee, blest place of my Nativitie!—
> London my home is: though by hard fate sent
> Into a long and irksome banishment;
> Yet since call'd back, henceforward let me be,
> O native country, repossest by thee!
> For, rather than I'll to the West return,
> I'll beg, of thee first here to have mine urn.

And in his "Farewell to Dean-Bourn," he applies to its inhabitants the harsh epithets of "a rocky generation."

A people currish; churlish as the seas,
And rude almost as rudest savages.

"This Farewell to Dean-Bourn," observes a writer in the Gentleman's Magazine, "is still remembered by some old people of that parish, though very imperfectly, it never having been committed to writing, but, like Ossian's Poems, conveyed from father to son by oral instruction." *

Whatever foundation there may have been for these querulous invectives, it is probable the period he passed at Dean-Prior was the happiest of his life, for, when ejected from his vicarage in 1648, in consequence of the civil wars, he found himself, on retiring to London, where he had no fifths paid, involved in want. It was during this year, and, perhaps, shortly after his arrival in town, that he published his volume of Poems, under the title of "Hesperides, or the Works, both Humane and Divine, of Robert Herrick, Esq. London, 1648." It is a thick duodecimo, containing 398 pages, to which are annexed, occupying 79 pages more, and bearing date a year anterior to the Hesperides, "His Noble Numbers; or his Pious Pieces, wherein (amongst other things) he sings the Birth of Christ, and sighes for his Saviour's Suffering on the Crosse." Prefixed is an engraving of his head, (a shoulder-piece,) by Marshall, with several devices, as two angels bringing chaplets of laurel, Pegasus on Par-

* Vol. lxvi. part ii. p. 736.

nassus, Helicon, &c. &c. and the following complimentary lines, signed J. H. C.

Tempora cinxisset foliorum densior umbra:
Debetur genio laurea sylva tuo.
Tempora et illa tibi mollis redimisset oliva;
Scilicet excludis versibus arma tuis.
Admisces antiqua novis, jucunda severis:
Hinc juvenis discat, fœmina, virgo, senex.
Ut solo minores Phœbo, sic majores unus
Omnibus, ingenio, mente, lepore, stylo.

This collection of Poetry rendered him very popular in his day, and especially, remarks Wood, with the generous and boon Loyalists, among whom he was numbered as a sufferer. It displays, likewise, a very extended and familiar intimacy with the learned and with the patrons of Literature, and which could only have been obtained and supported by frequent visits to the capital. He seems early to have acquired the friendship of Ben Jonson *, and to have greatly lamented his loss. That he had frequently enjoyed his society is evident from the following stanza.

Ah Ben!
Say how, or when
Shall we thy Guests
Meet at those Lyric feasts,
Made at the Sun,
The Dog, the triple Tunne?
Where we such clusters had,
As made us nobly wild, not mad;

* Jonson was born 1574, and died 1637.

And yet each verse of thine
Out-did the meat, out-did the frolic wine.

He was, likewise, it is presumed, a favourite with the celebrated John Selden, who appears, from the lines I am about to quote, to have been a great admirer of his genius: they are addressed "To the most learned, wise, and Arch-Antiquary, M. John Selden." *

I who have favour'd many, come to be
Grac'd now at last, or glorified by thee.
——————— that the world may know it,
Whom they neglected, thou hast crown'd a poet,

To Endymion Porter, who died abroad in the Court of Charles the Second, and was a great patron of poets and literary men, a few of his pieces are devoted, and are pleasing tributes of gratitude and respect. He cultivated also the friendship of Denham †, to whom he has addressed some couplets on his "Prospective Poem," probably his far-famed Cooper's Hill, and which, from their style, clearly intimate, that a mutual regard had taken place between the poets. A connection, too, of the most cordial kind, existed between our author and Charles Cotton ‡, well known for his wit and humour, and for his translation of Montaigne. The little poem written by Herrick, in honour of this ingenious writer, betrays the warmth of

* Selden was born 1584 — died 1654.
† Denham died in 1668.
‡ Cotton was born 1630 — died 1687.

his affection, and is, at the same time, composed with energy and simplicity. *

As a considerable portion of the poetry of Herrick is of the Lyric species, the assistance of the sister art of Music was frequently required, and with the celebrated composers of his time, he was, therefore, intimately acquainted. The two Lawes, Henry and William, Goutire, Laniere, Wilson and Ramsay, are all noticed in his works. To Henry Lawes, the first musician of his age, the friend of Waller and of Milton, and by whom his memory has been immortalized, he appears to have been particularly a[redacted]. The lines addressed "To M. Henry [redacted]es, the excellent Composer of his Lyricks," speak the high idea he entertained of his musical talents.

Touch but thy Lyre, my Harry, and I hear
From thee some raptures of the rare Goutire:
Then, if thy voice commingle with the string,
I hear in thee the rare Laniere to sing,
Or curious Wilson.

On William too, the brother of Henry, the disciple of Giovanni Copernario, and who was killed at the siege of Chester the 26th of September, 1645, he has some elegiac versos. William was even thought superior to his brother; and Dr. Fuller asserts, that he made above thirty several sorts of music for voices and instruments; neither was there any instrument, then in use, but he composed to it so

* Hesperides, p. 362.

aptly, as if he had studied that only.* James Goutire and Dr. John Wilson were highly celebrated for their performance on the lute, on which instrument they excelled all the Englishmen of their time. The latter frequently played before Charles I., who usually "leaned, or laid his hand on his shoulder," and listened to him with great attention.† Nicholas Laniere was one of the private musicians to Charles I.; he had likewise merit as a painter, and both composed the symphonies to, and painted the scenes for the masques written by Ben Jonson for the court. One of the earliest productions of Herrick, "A Pastoral upon the Birth of Prince Charles," is set by this Italian.

It does not appear, that after the year 1648, the date of the Hesperides, our poet paid much attention to the Muses. He was, however, a contributor to the "Lachrymæ Musarum, expressed in Elegies upon the Death of Henry Lord Hastings," 1650; but the poem he has written for this Collection, and which is entitled "The new Charon," adds not a single laurel to his wreath. A tradition also is said to prevail at Dean-Bourn, that he was the original author of *Poor Robin's Almanack*, which was first published about the year 1661 or 1662, but nothing corroborative of this surmise is, I believe, to be found.

Twelve or thirteen years must have elapsed before he was restored to his vicarage, which, it

* Worthies in Wilts, p. 157.

† Wood's Fasti, 2 Col. 41., and Grainger, vol. ii. p. 367.

is probable, after so many years of penury and neglect, he was, notwithstanding all his poetical abuse, very willing to revisit. This event took place shortly after the Restoration in * 1660. He had, in the mean time, resided in St. Anne's parish, in Westminster, and one John Syms, according to the Register of Dean-Prior, occupied the benefice from 1648 to 1658. I have not been able to obtain any information as to the period of our author's death, neither Wood, Grainger, nor succeeding biographers, having noticed this event. There is reason to suppose, however, that he lived to enjoy his re-acquired preferment some years, and died the Vicar of Dean-Prior.

I have already mentioned, that the talents displayed in his "Hesperides" had obtained him popularity among his contemporaries; and the poetry of the times, therefore, has not neglected to record the pretensions and the characteristic merits of the bard. In the "Musarum Deliciæ," published in 1655, he is thus mentioned;

> ——————— *old* sack
> *Young* Herrick took to entertain
> The Muses in a sprightly vein.

To this liquor, indeed, it appears, from several parts of the Hesperides, that our author was uncommonly partial; in page 86. for instance, he declares,

* Walker's Sufferings of the Clergy, p. 267.

——————— thy isles shall lack
Grapes, before *Herrick* leaves Canarie sack;
Thou mak'st me airy, active to be born,
Like *Iphyclus*, upon the tops of corn.
Thou mak'st me nimble, as the winged Hours,
To dance and caper on the heads of flowers,
And ride the sun-beams.

In a singular Satire, likewise, called "Naps upon Parnassus, &c." 1658, he is again noticed in the following quaint lines.

——————— Flaccus Horace,
He was but a sour-ass,
And good for nothing but *Lyrick;*
There's but one to be found,
In all English ground,
Writes as well — who is hight *Robert Herrick.*

The few succeeding writers *, however, who have recorded the labours of Robert Herrick, say but little in his favour. Edward Phillips, who published his Theatrum Poetarum in 1675, after observing, that he was "not particularly influenced by any nymph or goddess, except his *maid Prue*," admits, that "a pretty flowery and pastoral gale of fancy, a vernal prospect of some hill, cave, rock, or fountain, but for the interruption of other trivial passages, might have made up none of the worst poetic† landskips." Winstanley, in general the mere copyist of

* Not having had an opportunity of consulting the biographical compilation of Jacobs, I know not whether he includes any detail of our poet. Cibber has not mentioned him.

† Theatrum Poetarum, p. 162.

Phillips, ventures to esteem him "one of the scholars of Apollo of the middle form, yet something above George Wither;" and, after quoting four of the worst lines in his book, declares, "I account him, in Fame, much of the same rank, as he was of the same standing, with one Robert Heath, the author of a poem entitled Clarastella."* Anthony Wood says nothing more, than that "these two books of poetry (namely, his *Hesperides*, and his *Noble Numbers*) made him much admired in the time when they were published;" and Grainger, when repeating the satiric observation of Phillips on the poet's maid, has been so obliging as to furnish us with an additional sarcasm; "it appears," remarks he, "from the effects of her inspiration, that Prue was but indifferently qualified for a tenth muse."

One chief cause of the neglect into which the poetry of Herrick has fallen, is its extreme inequality. It would appear he thought it necessary to publish every thing he composed, however trivial, however ridiculous or indecorous. The consequence has been, that productions, which Marlowe or Milton might have owned with pleasure, have been concealed, and nearly buried, in a crude and undigested mass. Had he shewn any taste in selection, I have no doubt the fate of his volume, though reduced two-thirds of its present size, had been widely different. Perhaps there is no collection of

* Lives of the most famous English Poets, pp. 166. and 167., published in 1687. Heath printed his Clarastella in 1650.

poetry in our language, which, in some respects, more nearly resembles the *Carmina* of Catullus. It abounds in Epigrams disgusting and indecent, in satirical delineations of personal defects, in frequent apologies for the levity of his Muse, and repeated declarations of the chastity of his life; it is interspersed, also, with several exquisite pieces of the amatory and descriptive kind, and with numerous addresses to his friends and relations, by whom he appears to have been greatly beloved. The variety of metre he has used in this work is truly astonishing; he has almost exhausted every form of rhymed versification, and in many he moves with singular ease and felicity.

It has been observed by Mr. Headley, that "Waller is too exclusively considered as the first man who brought versification to any thing like its present standard. Carew's pretensions to the same merit are seldom sufficiently either considered or allowed." * I may venture, I think, to introduce Herrick to my reader, as having greatly contributed toward this mechanical perfection. Many of his best effusions have the sweetness, the melody, and elegance of modern compositions. He was nearly, if not altogether, contemporary with Carew; for, if the account of Clarendon, who had been intimate with him, be correct, Carew lived fifty years †, and as we know that he died in 1639, he must have been born only a year

* Headley's Biographical Sketches, p. 39.

† Clarendon's Life and Continuation, vol. i. p. 36.

or two anterior to Herrick. It is true Carew's Poems were published earlier, being given to the world shortly after his death, probably in the year 1640 or 1641, for the second edition of his works bears date 1642; but as Herrick's productions were all written before 1648, and many of them twenty, or, perhaps, thirty years previous to this period, it is obvious he could have been no imitator of the friend of Clarendon, but must have been indebted merely to his own exertions and genius, for the grace and polish of his versification. I consider, likewise, the two little Poems, entitled the "Primrose" and the "Inquiry," which were first published in Carew's works, and afterwards appeared among the Poems of Herrick, to have certainly belonged to the latter, and to have been attributed to Carew by the Editor's mistake. In the first place it is not probable that Herrick, who certainly superintended and arranged his own productions, and who must have been familiar with the volume of his ingenious rival, would have republished these pieces as his own, if he had not possessed a prior claim to them; and, secondly, the Poem termed the "Inquiry," by the Editor of Carew, is, in Herrick, addressed to a beloved Mistress, to "Mrs. Eliz. Wheeler," under the name of the lost Shepherdess *; and by the nature of its variations from the copy in Carew, bears indubitable marks of being the original from whence those lines were taken; and which,

* Vide Hesperides, p. 120.

being probably written early, and circulated in manuscript by Herrick's friends, might easily, from a general resemblance of style and manner, be mistaken, by the Editor, for a genuine production of Carew.

If, in point of versification, Herrick may enter into competition with either Carew or Waller, he will be found still more competent to contend with them as to sentiment and imagery. It has been justly observed, that "Carew has the ease, without the pedantry, of Waller*;" the remark will apply with equal propriety to Herrick. His amatory poems unite the playful gaiety of Anacreon with the tender sweetness of Catullus, and are altogether devoid of that mythological allusion and cold conceit, which, in the pages of Waller, so frequently disgust the reader. There is a vein also of rich description in the poetry of Herrick, undiscoverable in the productions of the two other poets, and which resembles the best manner of Milton's Minora, and Marlowe's Passionate Shepherd. Nor has he been unsuccessful in imitating the Horatian style and imagery, of which I shall give a specimen, while, at the same time, the morality of another portion of his lyrics breathes an air of the most pleasing melancholy. I hesitate not, therefore, to consider him in the same degree superior to Carew, as Carew most assuredly is to Waller, whose versification, as I have elsewhere observed, has alone embalmed his memory.

* Headley, vol. i. Biographical Sketches, p. 39.

In bringing forward proofs of the justness of the general observations I have now given on the merits of the poetry of Herrick, it will be necessary to throw them under some arrangement; and the following will, perhaps, best answer our purpose, viz. AMATORY, ANACREONTIC, HORATIAN, MORAL, and DESCRIPTIVE.

No. XLIII.

Quid sit futurum cras, fuge quærere: et
Quem sors dierum cunque dabit, lucro
Appone: nec dulces amores
Sperne, puer, neque tu choreas.

HORATIUS.

THE taste for AMATORY Poetry at the period when Herrick flourished, appears to have been very gross and defective; it was either loaded with ideas coarse and vulgarly obscene, or was vitiated by metaphysical or mythological conceits. Elegance, delicate voluptuousness, or pathos, were in vain sought for where they were most required. It was our author, with his contemporaries Wither, Shirley, and Carew, who re-introduced a style of composition in this province, more consonant to Nature's genuine feelings. Cowley, and his disciples in general, wrote only to excite surprise; and those who adopted a more intelligible and familiar manner, as Sir John Suckling and others, were rather celebrated for an easy and sportive levity, than for that impassioned sentiment, which should peculiarly distinguish the strains of Love. It is singular, but true, that more than forty years anterior to the period we are speak-

ing of, viz. the period of 1640, a purer taste prevailed in this species of Poetry; many of the songs of Shakspeare and Fletcher are exquisitely beautiful; and in the Pastorals * of Drayton may be found various passages, which speak the language of passion and simplicity.

Though the production of poems of this kind may be deemed by many an easy and a trifling task, it is certain that few of our poets have pre-eminently excelled in imparting to these little pieces the grace and interest they are susceptible of. In the Collections of Amatory poetry we already possess, it is seldom that more than one or two compositions are ascribed to the same author; and it was not, indeed, until the appearance of the rustic Burns, that Bard of Nature and of Love, that we could boast of a writer of eminent genius, who had paid due attention to this department of Lyric poetry, and had brought forward numerous specimens of undoubted excellence. Nor when we consider the difficulties to be encountered in the attempt, is this to be wondered at. "The poetical description of a fair form," observes an elegant critic, "requires the comparison of every kindred object of delight, and the richest colouring that art can bestow. The expression of emotions, on the other hand, must be conducted upon a simple plan; the feelings of the soul must declare

* They were published with the following quaint title: "Idea. The Shepherd's Garland; fashioned in nine Eglogs. Rowland's Sacrifice to the Nine Muses. London, 1593." 4to.

themselves in artless touches of nature and the real symptoms of passion; and the poet's hand must only appear in the delicacy of his strokes, and the softness and harmony of his versification." *

When such are the obstacles to be overcome, that even in the most polished stage of society, and when taste has become infinitely more correct and chaste, it is no common occurrence to meet with amatory poetry of superior merit, surprise and pleasure must surely be excited by the singular purity of style, sweetness of versification, and warmth of sentiment, which characterise the following extracts from a poet, who wrote at the commencement of the seventeenth century.

TO ANTHEA.

1.

Bid me to live, and I will live
Thy Protestant to be:
Or bid me love, and I will give
A loving heart to thee.

2.

A heart as soft, a heart as kind,
A heart as sound and free,
As in the whole world thou canst find —
That heart I'll give to thee.

3.

Bid that heart stay, and it will stay,
To honour thy decree:

* Aikin on Song-Writing, pp. 106, 107.

Or bid it languish quite away,
And it shall do so for thee.

4.

Bid me despair, and I'll despair
Under yon Cypress tree;
Or bid me die, and I will dare
E'en death, to die for thee.

5.

Thou art my life, my love, my heart,
The very eyes of me:
And hast command of every part,
To live and die for thee. P. 122.

The melody of these lines cannot, I think, for the measure in which they are written, be easily exceeded. The second and fifth stanzas have peculiar merit; and the burst of passion in the last must be felt by every one.

As Herrick alike excels in the light and sportive, as in the more serious and impassioned effusion, I shall, for the sake of variety, alternate them, and the next composition which presents itself, can lay claim to no ordinary originality and elegance: it is entitled

THE KISS, A DIALOGUE.

1. Among thy fancies, tell me this,
What is the thing we call a kiss?
2. I shall resolve you what it is.
It is a creature born and bred
Between the lips, all cherry red,
By love and warm desires fed,
Chor. And makes more soft the Bridal Bed.

1. Has it a speaking virtue? 2. Yes;
1. How speaks it, say? 2. Do you but this,
Part your join'd lips, then speaks your kiss;
Chor. And this love's sweetest language is.

1. Has it a body? 2. Aye, and wings,
With thousand rare encolourings;
And as it flies, it gently sings,
Chor. Love, honey yields; but never stings.

P. 149.

In the ensuing little Dialogue, which is supposed to take place between Herrick and his favourite mistress, Amarillis, there is much pastoral simplicity, a very easy flow in the versification, and the terminating stanza is neat and pointed.

Herr. My dearest Love, since thou wilt go,
And leave me here behind thee;
For love or pity let me know
The place where I may find thee.

Amarill. In country meadows pearl'd with dew,
And set about with lilies;
There filling maunds * with cowslips, you
May find your Amarillis.

Herr. What have the meads to do with thee,
Or with thy youthful hours?
Live thou at court, where thou may'st be
The Queen of men, not flowers.

Let country wenches make them fine
With posies, since it's fitter
For thee with richest gems to shine,
And like the stars to glitter.

* *Maund* is a word used by Shakspeare, and means a basket.

Amarill. You set too high a rate upon
A Shepherdess so homely,
Herr. Believe it, dearest, there's not one
I' th' court that's half so comely.

I prithee stay. (*Amar.*) I must away:
Herr. Let's kiss first, then we'll sever;
Ambo. And though we bid adieu to day,
We shall not part for ever. P. 384.

Numerous short poems and votive hymns are to be found in this Collection, and which, in their structure and style, bear a striking resemblance to the ancient Greek epigram. They are, like it, devoid of point and satire, and either delineate rural scenery, or are addressed to some Nymph, God, or Goddess, with votive offerings. Among a vast variety of these dedicated to Venus, Bacchus, Cupid, Apollo, and Neptune, to Meadows, Sycamores, Fountains, &c. &c. I have selected the following "Short Hymn to Venus" as a specimen of the manner in which they are executed. The second line of this little morsel possesses much terseness and felicity of expression; and the whole, with many similar poems of equal merit, prove that our author had cultivated a taste for the peculiar graces of Antiquity, for the chaste and simple beauties of the Greek Anthologia.

Goddess, I do love a Girl
Ruby-lipt, and tooth'd with pearl:
If so be, I may but prove
Lucky in this maid I love;
I will promise there shall be
Myrtles offered up to thee. P. 157.

For sweetness of versification, purity of diction, and amorous tenderness of sentiment, there is no piece in the volume of Herrick which exceeds "His Covenant or Protestation to Julia." The lines I have distinguished by Italics are in the poet's best manner, and breathe the most delicate spirit of endearment.

Why dost thou wound, and break my heart,
As if we should for ever part?
Hast thou not heard an oath from me,
After a day, or two, or three,
I would come back and live with thee?
Take, if thou dost distrust that vow,
This second protestation now.
Upon thy cheek that spangl'd tear,
Which sits as Dew of Roses there;
That tear shall scarce be dry'd before
I'll kiss the threshold of thy door.
Then weep not, Sweet; but thus much know,
I'm half return'd before I go. P. 390.

A naïveté and playfulness of a very fascinating kind, at once elegant and apposite, distinguish the poem called "The Bracelet," and evince the powers of the writer in depicting the gaieties of love.

Why I tie about thy wrist,
Julia, this my silken twist;
For what other reason is't,
But to shew thee how in part,
Thou my pretty Captive art?
But thy Bond-slave is my heart!
'Tis but silk that bindeth thee,
Snap the thread, and thou art free:
But 'tis otherwise with me.

I am bound, and fast bound so,
That from thee I cannot go:
If I could, I would not so. P. 147.

The voluptuous pathos of the following little poem addressed "To Julia," is perfectly in the style of Tibullus, and, though consisting but of four lines, more powerfully impresses the heart than many pages of modern amatory poetry.

JULIA, when thy Herrick dies,
Close thou up thy poet's eyes;
And his *last breath*, let it be
Taken in by none but thee. P. 216.

The spirit of this closing couplet has been caught by Pope in his Eloisa. She is represented calling on Abelard to pay her the last sad offices, and exclaims with enthusiastic fondness,

Suck my *last breath*, and *catch* my flying soul.

Of the succeeding production, which will close our specimens of the poet in this province of his muse, though many more might with propriety be adduced, there cannot, I should imagine, be any difference of opinion. It is, though in its plan an imitation of the Passionate Shepherd of Marlowe, without servility or plagiarism, either in sentiment or description. In the latter respect it is, without doubt, superior to its prototype; and the couplets dis-

tinguished by the Italic letter demand particular approbation.

TO PHILLIS.

Live, live with me, and thou shalt see
The pleasures I'll prepare for thee:
What sweets the country can afford
Shall bless thy bed, and bless thy board.
The soft sweet moss shall be thy bed,
With crawling woodbine overspread;
By which the silver-shedding streams
Shall gently melt thee into dreams.
Thy clothing next shall be a gown
Made of the Fleece's purest down.
The tongues of kids shall be thy meat;
Their milk thy drink; and thou shalt eat
The paste of filberts for thy bread
With cream of cowslips buttered:
Thy feasting tables shall be hills
With daisies spread, and daffadills;
Where thou shalt sit, and Red-breast by,
For meat shall give thee melody.
I'll give thee chains and carkanets *
Of primroses and violets.
A bag and bottle thou shalt have;
That richly wrought, and this as brave;
So that as either shall express
The Wearer's no mean Shepherdess.
At sheering times, and yearly wakes,
When *Themilis* his pastime makes,
There thou shalt be; and be the wit,
Nay more, the feast and grace of it.
On holy-days, when Virgins meet
To dance the heys with nimble feet,

* Carkanet, a bracelet or necklace.

Thou shalt come forth, and then appear
The *Queen of Roses* for that year.
And, having danc'd 'bove all the best,
Carry the garland from the rest.
In wicker baskets Maids shall bring
To thee my dearest Shepharling,
The blushing apple, bashful pear,
And shame-fac'd plum, all simpering there:
Walk in the groves, and thou shalt find
The name of Phillis in the rind
Of every straight and smooth-skin tree;
Where kissing that, I'll twice kiss thee.
To thee a sheep-hook I will send,
Be-pranck'd with ribbands, to this end,
This, this alluring hook might be
Less for to catch a sheep, than me.
Thou shalt have possets, wassails fine,
Not made of ale, but spiced wine;
To make thy Maids and self free mirth,
All sitting near the glitt'ring hearth.
Thou shalt have ribbands, roses, rings,
Gloves, garters, stockings, shoes, and strings
Of winning colours, that shall move
Others to lust, but me to love.
These, nay and more, thine own shall be,
If thou wilt love, and live with me.

P. 223.

Of ANACREONTIC Poetry there are numerous specimens in the volume of Herrick. Many of these are extremely beautiful, and there are many likewise, which, without the smallest regret, may be consigned to utter oblivion. Herrick, however, seems to have entertained a more correct idea of the style and genius of Anacreon, than the generality of those who have since attempted to imitate the lively Grecian. The

songs of revelry and mirth, descriptive of the joys of wine, form only a part of the productions of the Teian Bard; he abounds also in the most delicate delineations of beauty, touched, indeed, with a pencil light as air, but picturesque, and guided by the finest taste. They are miniatures, in fact, which, though occupying a small space, are wrought with perfect symmetry, and glow with the richest tinting.

The English poet has evidently copied both these modes of composition; and if, as might be expected, he fail to rival his favourite, he has yet presented us with imitations which merit much praise, and are, in general, undoubtedly superior to the efforts of his contemporaries. Of the first species, the following lines upon himself may be considered as a proper example.

> Borne I was to meet with Age,
> And to walk Life's pilgrimage.
> Much I know of Time is spent,
> Tell I can't, what's resident.
> Howsoever, cares adieu!
> I'll have nought to say to you:
> But I'll spend my coming hours,
> Drinking wine, and crown'd with flowers.
>
> P. 222.

Of the second, what he has termed "The Vision," I hesitate not to bring forward as a happy proof, that he understood and felt the characteristic beauties of Anacreon.

> Sitting alone, as one forsook,
> Close by a silver-shedding brook;

With hands held up to Love, I wept;
And after sorrows spent, I slept:
Then in a Vision I did see
A glorious form appear to me;
A Virgin's face she had; her dress
Was like a sprightly Spartaness.
A silver bow with green silk strung,
Down from her comely shoulders hung:
And as she stood, the wanton air
Dandled the ringlets of her hair.
Her legs were such Diana shows,
When tuck'd up she a hunting goes;
With buskins short'ned, to descry
The happy dawning of her thigh:
Which when I saw, I made access
To kiss that tempting nakedness:
But she forbade me, with a wand
Of Myrtle she had in her hand;
And chiding me, said, Hence, remove,
Herrick, thou art too coarse to love. P. 54.

The picture here is lively and elegantly drawn, with so much minuteness, indeed, and spirit, as to bring the object immediately to the eye.

In my selection of pieces under this head, it would be deemed unpardonable were I to omit the exquisite morsel entitled "The Captiv'd Bee." In this, perhaps, more than in any other production, Herrick may be pronounced truly Anacreontic.

As *Julia* once a slumb'ring lay,
It chanc'd a Bee did flie that way,
After a dew, or dew-like shower,
To tipple freely in a flower.

For some rich flower, he took the lip
Of *Julia*, and began to sip;
But when he felt he suck'd from thence
Honey, and in the quintessence,
He drank so much he scarce could stir.
So *Julia* took the Pilferer.
And thus surpris'd, as Filchers use,
He thus began himself t'excuse:
Sweet *Lady-Flower*, I never brought
Hither the least one thieving thought;
But taking those rare lips of yours
For some fresh, fragrant, luscious flowers,
I thought I might there take a taste,
Where so much syrop ran at waste.
Besides, know this, I never sting
The flower that gives me nourishing;
But with a kiss, or thanks, do pay
For Honey, that I bear away.
This said, he laid his little *scrip*
Of honey 'fore her Ladyship,
And told her, as some tears did fall,
That, that he took, and that was all.
At which she smil'd; and bade him go
And take his bag; but thus much know,
When next he came a pilfering so,
He should from her full lips derive,
Honey enough to fill his hive. P. 77.

Confessedly difficult as it is to assume, with grace and ease, the HORATIAN garb, our author has, in more than one instance, exhibited himself to advantage in the costume of the Roman poet. That mixture of voluptuous epicurism and serious thought, which particularises many of the odes and some of the epistles of Horace, he has caught with much effect in his "Address to his friend Mr. John Wicks," nor in his

"Ode to Sir Clipseby Crew" * has he shewn less skill in imitating the still lighter graces of this fascinating bard. The former of these pieces will convey to the reader an adequate idea of our author's merit in this arduous department.

Is this a life to break thy sleep?
To rise as soon as day doth peep?
To tire thy patient ox or ass
By noon, and let thy good days pass,
Not knowing this, that Jove decrees
Some mirth t' adulce man's miseries?
No; 'tis a life, to have thine oil,
Without extortion, from thy soil:
Thy faithful fields to yield thee grain,
Although with some, yet little pain:
To have thy mind, and nuptial bed,
With fears, and cares uncumbered;
A pleasing wife, that by thy side
Lies softly panting like a bride.
This is to live, and to endear
Those minutes, Time has lent us here.
Then, while Fates suffer, live thou free,
As is that air that circles thee.—
Time steals away like to a stream,
And we glide hence away with them.
No sound recalls the hours once fled,
Or roses, being withered.
Nor us, my friend, when we are lost,
Like to a dew, or melted frost.
Then live we mirthful, while we should,
And turn the iron age to gold.
Let 's feast and frolic, sing and play,
And thus less last, than live our day.

* Hesperides, p. 230.

Whose life with care is overcast,
That man's not said to live, but last:
Nor is't a life, seven years to tell,
But for to live that half seven well:
And that we'll do; as men, who know.
Some few sands spent, we hence must go.
Both to be blended in the Urn,
From whence there 's never a return. P. 273.

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